



Clever connectors

Clear writing depends on clear connections. The right linking words help your ideas flow smoothly, making your arguments easier to follow. Use the following academic connectors to add information, show contrast, present evidence, and bring your writing to a strong conclusion.

To add information

Strong academic options:

Furthermore, moreover, in addition, additionally, also, likewise, similarly, equally – all excellent and formal

In the same way, in the same vein – good if used sparingly and appropriately

Alongside this – clear, slightly less common, but still useful

Weaker or context-sensitive:

Further to this – very formal; more common in letters or policy documents

Better: *in addition, additionally*

In a related point – can feel clunky; not a common academic connector

Better: *similarly, equally*

Phrases to avoid in student writing:

What's more, not only that, plus – too informal or conversational

To contrast

Strong academic options:

However, nevertheless, nonetheless, in contrast, conversely, even so, still, despite this, yet – all academically appropriate

On the other hand, alternatively – good if used precisely

That said – soft and conversational, but often useful in essays or reviews

Context-sensitive:

That said – semi-formal; better in reflective writing than hard research

Use sparingly, more suited to essays

Phrases to avoid in student writing:

“But” at the start of formal sentences

Anyhow, mind you, anyway – all informal



To show cause and effect

Strong academic options:

Therefore, thus, consequently, as a result, hence, accordingly, for this reason, in turn, as such – all solid and formal

Watch for tone or usage:

because of this / due to this / this explains why / this led to – more explanatory or narrative in tone; good in discussion sections but may be too casual in introductions.

These phrases tend to sound more conversational or narrative than formal academic connectors like *therefore, thus, or consequently*. That's because:

1. They often reflect the writer's own thinking process, almost like explaining something aloud.
 - *"This led to a drop in productivity"* feels like a storyteller's voice.
 - *"This explains why the results differ"* has a reflective, almost explanatory tone.
2. They lack the abstraction and compactness that formal academic writing often prefers.
 - *"Due to this"* or *"because of this"* might appear in spoken explanations or more journalistic writing, but they don't carry the same concise authority as *"therefore"* or *"as a result."*

Where they work well:

These phrases can still be useful, especially in discussion sections, where you're interpreting results, drawing connections, or emphasizing causality in plain terms.

But they may undermine the tone of an introduction or theoretical framework, where the style should be more formal, detached, and concept-focused.

Scrib.tip:

Use *"because of this"* or *"this led to"* in discussion or conclusion sections to explain effects clearly. In more formal parts of your writing (e.g., introductions or methods), choose concise, academic alternatives such as *"therefore," "thus,"* or *"as a result."*

Phrases to avoid:

So, that's why, then (as a cause/effect connector) – too informal

To emphasize

Strong academic options:

Notably, significantly, in particular, crucially, indeed, especially
It is worth emphasizing that, it is important to highlight that – excellent for advanced writing

Clichéd or overly rhetorical:

What matters most is – feels subjective and overused
Try: *of central importance is*

It should be noted that – acceptable, but often overused and vague
Try: *notably* or just drop the phrase and state the fact confidently

Phrases to avoid:

Needless to say, obviously, clearly – all overconfident and informal

To conclude

Strong academic options:

In summary, to conclude, to summarize, ultimately, finally, overall, in brief, in sum, on the whole – clean and useful

Too informal or rhetorical:

To wrap up, to end on, in closing – more suited to presentations or blog posts than academic essays

Drop or reserve for teaching examples

In essence – okay, but better in philosophy/humanities than scientific writing

Phrases to avoid:

In a nutshell, at the end of the day, last but not least – clichés

→ **Quick Guide Coming Up**

On the next page, you'll find a handy one-page summary of all the clever connectors we've covered. Print it off or keep it nearby next time you're writing an essay. It's designed as your go-to reference.

In the meantime...

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| Purpose | Use this | Avoid this |
|---------------------------------|--|--|
| To add information | furthermore, moreover, in addition, additionally, also, likewise, similarly, equally | what's more, not only that, plus → These sound conversational or vague and don't suit formal academic tone. |
| To show contrast | however, nevertheless, nonetheless, on the other hand, in contrast, conversely, even so, despite this, yet | but (at the start of a sentence), anyhow, anyway, mind you → These are too informal or casual, and may make your writing sound unpolished. |
| To show cause and effect | therefore, thus, consequently, as a result, hence, accordingly, for this reason, in turn, as such | so, that's why, then → These are imprecise and better suited to speech or casual writing. |
| To emphasize a point | importantly, notably, significantly, in particular, crucially, indeed, especially, it is worth emphasizing that, it is important to highlight that | clearly, obviously, needless to say, what matters most is → These sound subjective, overconfident, or clichéd – let the facts speak. |
| To conclude or summarize | in summary, to conclude, to summarize, in brief, ultimately, overall, on the whole, in sum | to wrap up, to end on, in a nutshell, at the end of the day, last but not least → These are informal, overused, or more suited to speech than serious academic writing. |