

## English Grammar – Joining Phrases and Filler Words

A conjunction is a word that links words, phrases, or clauses. We can also use a short phrase to join sentences together or to give us time to think.

**Joining Phrases.** These phrases allow you to join one idea to another:

- now that  
Now that we agree on the choice, we can talk about how much we should spend.
- in order that  
I think that we should take a break in order that we can take stock.
- in order to  
We must document everything in order to consolidate our ideas.
- only if  
I will sign the contract only if my lawyer says it's OK.
- instead of  
Let's eat out instead of eating at home.
- providing that  
I will contract Kelly providing that her references are excellent.
- even if  
I intend to hire three more interns even if you disagree.
- in case  
I'm going to buy another crate of wine in case what we have is insufficient.
- as if  
You must treat the new employee as if he knows nothing.
- rather than  
I'll drive to the office rather than taking a taxi.
- as soon as  
I'll pay you the money as soon as you sign the contract.
- as long as  
You can have a job here as long as you behave impeccably.
- on top of that  
I intend to buy a house, renovate it and plant some trees. On top of that, I'll build a pool.
- not even  
I won't leave my house, not even when the hurricane arrives.
- due to  
The match has been cancelled due to the storm hitting the city.

**Filler Words.** These words can be used instead of a pause and they give you time to think:

- ..., erm ....
- ..., so ....
- ..., and so ....
- ..., and ....
- ..., but ....
- ..., however ....

**Starting phrases.** These phrases can be used at the start of a sentence to give you time to think:

- Well ....
- Actually ....
- I think that ....
- As a matter of fact ....
- I was thinking ....
- As it happens ....
- While we're on the subject ....
- To be honest ....

**Finishing phrases.** These phrases can be used at the end of a sentence to give you time to think:

- ..., you know?
- ..., do you know what I mean?

**Exercise:** Use the website YouGlish (<https://youglish.com/>) to listen to and analyze how these words and phrases are used.