

Connecting ideas

English Grammar · A2

and / but / or / so / because

Connecting words

and / but / or	so	because
join ideas	result	reason
tea and coffee	tired, so I slept	... because it rained

Connecting words: reference card grid

Conjunctions link two ideas together:

- **and** (and): Parallel, additive. **but** (but): Contrast, opposite.
- **or** (or): Choice. **so** (so): Result. **because** (because): Reason.

I was tired, so I went to bed.

I was tired, so I went to bed.

She stayed home because it was raining.

She stayed at home because it was raining.

Note: *so* introduces a **result**, while *because* introduces a **reason**; do not mix them up: Tired → **so** go to sleep; Slept → **because** tired.

Conditional sentences express “if... then...”:

- **Zero Conditional** (universal facts): If + , .
- **First Conditional** (future possibilities): If + , will + .

If you heat ice, it melts.

If you heat ice, it melts. (Universal fact → Zero Conditional)

If it rains, we will stay home.

If it rains, we will stay at home. (Future possibility → First Conditional)

Note: In clauses introduced by **if**, use the **present simple** even when referring to the future: ~If it will rain~ × → If it rains ✓.

Adverbs of Frequency

Adverbs of frequency indicate “how often”: always (100%) > usually > often > sometimes > rarely > never (0%).

Position Rules:

- Place them **before the main verb**.
- But place them **after the be verb**.

I always brush my teeth.

I always brush my teeth. (Before a lexical verb)

He is never late.

He is never late. (After a be verb)

Note: Adverbs of frequency go **before** lexical verbs and **after** be verbs: I **often** read; She is **often** busy.

Common Errors

- × ~Because it was raining, so we stayed home.~ → ✓ Because it was raining, we stayed home. / It was raining, **so** we stayed home. — In Chinese, “because... so...” appears as a pair, but in English, you can only keep **one** of *because* or *so*.
- × ~Although he is rich, but he is not happy.~ → ✓ Although he is rich, he is not happy. — Similarly, in the Chinese structure “although... but...”, you can only choose one of *although* or *but*.
- × ~I like apples and I like bananas and I like oranges.~ → ✓ I like apples, bananas **and** oranges. — When listing multiple items, separate them with commas and use *and* only before the final item.
- × ~I play sometimes football.~ → ✓ I **sometimes** play football. / I play football **sometimes**. — An adverb cannot be placed between a verb and its object.