

INSTRUCTOR: Coordination and subordination. In grammar, we use coordination and subordination to join closely related clauses. A clause is a word group that has a subject and a verb. An independent clause can stand on its own as a sentence. Even though they are able to stand on their own, independent clauses can also be joined together. Combining clauses helps writers add variety to their writing and avoid short, choppy sentences.

In coordination, two independent clauses are combined. In subordination, one of the clauses is subordinated and then joined to an independent clause.

Let's look at the correct way to use coordination and subordination. Coordination joins two independent clauses that are equal in importance. The clauses are usually joined with a comma and a coordinating conjunction. The acronym for the seven coordinating conjunctions is FANBOYS-- "for," "and," "nor," "but," "or," "yet," "so."

Here's an example of coordination. "The human body keeps all the iron it digests. The only way we lose iron is through bleeding." We can use a comma and the coordinating conjunction "so" to join these two sentences. "The human body keeps all the iron it digests, so the only way we lose iron is through bleeding."

We can also join two closely related clauses by using a semicolon, either by itself or with a transitional expression. Common transitional expressions include "in fact," "moreover," "nevertheless," and "therefore." Note that a comma is required after the transitional expression.

Subordination shows how one clause depends on another. A subordinating conjunction is used to turn an independent clause into a subordinate clause. Here are some common subordinating conjunctions.

A subordinate clause is subordinate to, or dependent on, an independent clause. Here's an example of subordination. The subordinating conjunction "because" makes the clause on the left subordinate. "Because the body keeps all the iron it

digests, the only way we lose iron is through bleeding." Note that a comma is needed after an opening subordinate clause. If the independent clause comes first, however, a comma is not always needed. "The only way we lose iron is through bleeding because the body keeps all the iron it digests."

A comma should be used only when an independent clause is followed by a contrasting, subordinate clause. "Supplements usually help people with low iron levels, although a change in diet may be just as helpful."

Remember, use coordination and subordination in your writing to join clauses and show how they relate to one another. Be sure to use the correct punctuation and conjunction when joining clauses to keep your writing logical and error-free.