Transitions

Think of transitions as tour guides for your paper. They guide your audience from one point to the next, keeping them on track and ensuring that the reader doesn’t get lost along the way. Poor transitions will confuse your audience, and instead of focusing on your analysis, your readers will be trying to figure out where they are and how they got there.

Sentence transitions are words or phrases used to transition between sentences. These transitions guide your reader from one sentence to the next, but they are not strong enough to propel your reader from one paragraph to the next because they are made to be smaller and more localized. You wouldn’t hang your fifteen-pound backpack on a thumbtack; similarly, you wouldn’t want to depend on a one-word transition to guide a reader to your next main idea.

Sentence transitions:
- however
- because
- although
- next
- in addition
- despite this
- for example

Paragraph transitions require more than just a word or phrase. Often, paragraph transitions are made up of one or more sentences.

If you’re putting a hook on the wall to hang your heavy backpack, you first put a nail in the wall for support, and then put the hook on the nail. The nail is usually the last sentence of one paragraph, and the hook is the first sentence of the next one.