

## The Fascinating World of Conjunctive Adverbs



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### So what is a “conjunctive adverb”?

An adverb that connects two *independent* clauses (both have a subject & a verb)

Explains the relationship between the two clauses

- cause & effect
- sequence or priority
- contrast
- comparison

Examples: therefore, nevertheless, still, thus, consequently, hence, otherwise, furthermore, moreover, accordingly, besides, however

**Conjunctive adverbs act like regular conjunctions, but they're punctuated differently**

**Coordinating conjunctions (for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so) that join independent clauses require a *comma* before the conjunction**

**"I think best in the mornings, *but* I fall asleep in the afternoons."** (Celia Elliott)

**Conjunctive adverbs take a *semicolon* before and a *comma* after**

**"I think; *therefore*, I am."** (René Descartes, who said it in French)

## **English Dirty Trick #478**

***However* is both a conjunctive adverb (CA) and an interrupter (I) and is punctuated differently depending on its use**

**CA: "I think; *however*, I try not to think too much.**

**I: "I think, *however*, that safety measures are required."**

**How can you tell? If the words following *however* form an independent clause, then it's a conjunctive adverb and takes a semicolon and comma**

***However* can just be an adverb, too! Then it's not punctuated at all.**

**CA: "*However* hard I try, I cannot think of more than two things at once.**

## To recap:

**Punctuation is important—faulty punctuation  
can cause mistakes in interpretation of  
highly technical material**

“The reason it’s worth standing up for punctuation is not that it’s an arbitrary system of notation known only to an over-sensitive elite who have attacks of the vapours when they see it misapplied. The reason to stand up for punctuation is that without it ~~there is no reliable way of~~ communicating meaning.”—Lynne Truss, *Eats, Shoots & Leaves: The Zero Tolerance Approach to Punctuation*

*is ambiguous.*



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