**Discourse Markers**

When speaking or informal writing, such as emails or texts to friends, the following discourse markers are often used. There are many of course, but here are some of the most common.

* **Anyway** – marks a shift away from a topic. *It’s sold out, anyway, I didn’t want to go****.***
* **Actually** – indicates that what you are saying is a surprise to you or is the opposite of what might be imagined or introduces the opposite response to what someone wants or expects. *I thought I didn’t like dance shows but actually, I quite enjoyed it.* *Actually, I’d prefer if if you didn’t smoke in here.*
* **As I was saying** ***/ As I said*** – continuing a theme after a change of subject. *As I was saying before I was interrupted, I’d like to go to the cinema*. *As I said last week, I don’t enjoy opera.*
* **Absolutely** – used as a stronger way of saying yes.*A. Would you like a holiday in Thailand? B. Absolutely, when do we go?*
* **Exactly** – used to emphasise what you mean. *What exactly are you talking about? Exactly, that’s what I meant.*
* **Okay** or**OK** – understood or agreed. *Okay, I get it.*
* **Well**– used to indicate an emotion including: annoyance, anger, surprise, disappointment and relief. *Well, that’s not what I wanted to hear.* *Well, I didn’t expect that!*
* **Fine** – used informally to indicate that something is not good. *That’s another fine mess you’ve got me into. A. How are you since your wife left you? B, Fine, what do you think*
* **Mind (you)** – used to highlight or stress something you said to avoid misunderstanding. *He couldn’t help me, mind you, I know he’s busy so it’s not his fault.* Or to introduce something else that needs to be considered. My kids never listen to me. Mind you, I didn’t either at their age so I guess it’s normal.
* **You know** – indicates that what you’re saying is known by the listener. or to check they understand with a question mark. Also used as a filler while you’re thinking of what to say next. *Studying economics is hard, you know.*
* **I mean**– introduces a statement to justify what you’ve said.*It was a tough driving test,* *I mean I took my test in the rush hour in the rain.*
* **For a start**– introduces the first item of a logical sequence or the most important item of other possibilities. *The driving test in Spain is difficult, for a start it’s all in Spanish.*
* **What’s more**– introduces a new fact or argument and implies that this new fact or argument is more important than the one just given. Used without contraction for formal speech and writing. *The stock market fell in 2008 and what’s more, our pension fund was tied up in stocks*.
* **On top of that**– used to indicate something unpleasant in addition to what you’ve just said.*I lost my job and on top of that, I was fined for speeding.*
* **To tell you the truth / truth be told** – indicates that hat you’re saying is honest and open. *To tell you the truth, I was more than a little worried. Truth be told, I’m concerned about the project*
* **To be honest** – explains that you are being truthful about what you’re saying, usually with an understanding that the person you’re talking to will be disappointed. *To be honest, I don’t think your offer is sufficient.*
* **Sort of / kind of** – used to describe that something is partly true but it’s not the entire explanation. Or that something is difficult to explain entirely. *Your answer is sort of correct but there’s a bit more to it that that. My new car is a kind of blue green colour*. *Not sure what colour you’d call it.*

**FORMAL AND WRITTEN DISCOURSE MARKERS**

Discourse markers for more formal writing situations organise your text logically. They are typical when writing formal letters or when writing essays or reports, especially at work.

They will also be use in formal speaking situations, such as presentations or speeches. For the IELTS writing exam, they are necessary to gain maximum marks under coherence and cohesion which is 25% of the mark.

* **Firstly, secondly, thirdly** – organise your points logically. *Firstly we need to reduce prices on the products. Secondly, we need to upgrade the channel to market etc. etc.*
* **Finally** – marks the final point of a list. *Finally I want to talk about the environment.*
* To begin with –
* **In addition**– provides extra information. *In addition to my earlier point, we also need to think about delivery.*
* **In conclusion** – marks the summary and round up of your essay or speech. *In conclusion, I have demonstrated that savings will be 10%.*
* **In summary** – another way to mark the conclusion. *In summary, the average costs will reduce.*
* **Moreover** – as a further matter, there is even more to tell you. *It’s a difficult decision, moreover, they would have to move home.*
* **On (the) one hand, on the other hand** – introduces two opposing ideas. *On the one hand it’s cheaper, on the other hand it means a lot of work to make it worth the trouble.*
* **What is more** – introduces a new fact or argument and implies that this new fact or argument is more important than the one just given. Used with contraction for informal. *The stock market fell in 2008, what is more is that the company had all it’s assets in stocks.*
* **Furthermore** – introduces an additional fact or argument. *Unemployment rates fell in 2018, furthermore, average salaries rose.*
* **Not only….but also** – used to give emphasis to a second point. This phrase uses ***inversions.*** *I not only worked in London, but also in Paris.*
* **For example** – used to give an example to show that something is true. *This will never work, for example the spring is broken.*
* **Such as** – introduces an example or examples of what you’re talking about. *There are lots of types of car on the road today, such as saloons, hatchbacks and four by fours.*
* **As a result**– introduces what happened because of something. *He failed his exams and, as a result, couldn’t attend university.*
* **Consequently** – because of this or as a result. *The road is closed, consequently we’ll need to wait until it’s open again.*
* **Nevertheless** – despite of what has just been said or written. *There are insufficient funds for the development, nevertheless, we’ll continue on the work and hope something turns up.*
* **By / in contrast** – a comparison which introduces something opposite to the first item. *The economy in the EU shrunk by 2%, by contrast, the USA saw growth of nearly 5%.*
* **In comparison**– used to discuss the ways in which two things are different. *Costs have risen in comparison to last year.*
* **In my opinion** – Used to give your opinion or point of view when you are confident of the facts. *In my opinion, it’s better to invest in language training as early as possible in our schools.*
* **Of course** – stating something that is known or obvious but important to state. *Of course, children benefit greatly from playing sports.*