

# Grammar Reference

## Linking devices of contrast

### Meaning and use

We can use different words and phrases to highlight a contrast between two parts of a sentence. Some of these words and phrases are:

**although, even though, despite, in spite of, however and but.**

***Although** we are the best of friends we still disagree from time to time.*  
***Even though** we are the best of friends we still disagree from time to time.*  
***Despite** being the best of friends we still disagree from time to time.*  
***In spite of** being the best of friends we still disagree from time to time.*  
*We are the best of friends; we still disagree from time to time, **however**.*  
*We are the best of friends **but** we still disagree from time to time.*

### Form

#### Although / Even though

These conjunctions are used at the beginning of a clause. They introduce a contrast between two ideas, sentences or clauses.

They have similar meanings and are used in the same way. **Even though** highlights the contrast more strongly than **although**.

***Even though** I did well at the interview I didn't get the job.*  
***Although** I did well at the interview I didn't get the job.*

***Even though** I was really angry I tried not to show it.*  
***Although** I was really angry I tried not to show it.*

#### Despite / in spite of

These are prepositions and are followed by nouns or noun phrases. They can't be followed directly by a verb phrase. If a verb is used it must be changed to the noun form (gerund).

***Despite** doing well at the interview I didn't get the job.*  
***In spite of** doing well at the interview I didn't get the job.*

***Despite** my being really angry I tried not to show it.*  
***In spite of** my being really angry I tried not to show it.*

A verb phrase can be used with these expressions by adding **the fact** after the preposition.

***Despite the fact** I did well at the interview I didn't get the job.*  
***In spite of the fact** I did well at the interview I didn't get the job.*

***Despite the fact** I was really angry I tried not to show it.*  
***In spite of the fact** I was really angry I tried not to show it.*

#### However

**However** is an adverb. It comes **after** the part of the sentence that is being contrasted. It can go in different parts of the clause.

*I did well at the interview. **However**, I didn't get the job.*  
*I did well at the interview; I didn't, **however**, get the job.*  
*I did well at the interview; I didn't get the job, **however**.*

*I was really angry; **however**, I tried not to show it.*  
*I was really angry; I tried, **however**, not to show it.*  
*I was really angry. I tried not to show it, **however**.*

#### But

This is a conjunction that links two parts of a sentence together. It goes before the clause that has the contrast.

*I did well at the interview **but** I didn't get the job.*  
*I was really angry **but** I tried not show it.*

#### Take note: Though and although

**Though** is a shortened form of **although**. Notice though that **although** we say **even though**, we **don't** say **even although**.

#### Take note: However at the beginning of a sentence

It is not a mistake to use **however** at the beginning of sentence. However, some people feel that is. If you want to avoid it, use a semi-colon after the first clause rather than a full-stop.

*I did well at the interview; **however**, I didn't get the job.*

