

50. SUBORDINATING CONJUNCTIONS INTRODUCING TIME CLAUSES (*after, because, as soon as...*)

Subordinating conjunctions are words or phrases that introduce dependent clauses in a sentence.

Time clauses are dependent clauses used to indicate when something happened.

The most common subordinating conjunctions that introduce time clauses are: *after, before, as soon as, since, until, when, whenever, while* and *as*.

EXAMPLES	FUNCTION
<i>The workers ended the strike <u>after</u> management agreed to give them a pay raise. (Management agreed to give a pay raise first, and then the workers ended the strike.)</i>	After is used to express that one event follows another.
<i>The workers ended the strike <u>before</u> management agreed to give them a pay raise. (First the workers ended the strike, and then management agreed to give them a raise.)</i>	Before is used to express that one event precedes (comes before) another.
<i>The workers ended the strike <u>as soon as</u> management agreed to give them a pay raise. (First management agreed to give the workers a pay raise, and soon after that the workers ended the strike.)</i>	As soon as is used to express that one event happens first and another happens immediately after.
<i>The workers have been on strike <u>since</u> management refused to give them a pay raise. (From the time management refused to give a pay raise until now, the workers have been on strike.)</i>	Since is used to express a time from the past to the present. It focuses on the time when an action or event began.
<i>The workers continued the strike <u>until</u> management agreed to give them a pay raise. (The strike would continue up to the time when management would agree to a pay raise.)</i>	Until is used to express the time when an event or action comes to an end.
<i>The workers ended the strike <u>when</u> management agreed to give them a pay raise. (The strike ended after management agreed to a pay raise.)</i>	When shows that one event happens slightly after another. <i>As soon as</i> has almost the same meaning as <i>when</i> . If you want to emphasize that one event came right after another, use <i>as soon as</i> .
<i><u>Whenever</u> there is heavy rain and flooding, the New York subway system malfunctions (doesn't function properly). (Every time there is heavy rain and flooding, the subway is seriously affected.)</i>	Whenever means every time.
<i><u>While</u> the politician was speaking to a large crowd at a rally, he fainted from heat exhaustion. (The politician's speech was interrupted when he fainted because of excessive heat.)</i>	While is used to express an action in progress. Sometimes this action is interrupted.
<i><u>As</u> the politician was speaking to a large crowd at a rally, he fainted from heat exhaustion. (The politician fainted in the middle of his speech.)</i>	As also is used to express an action in progress that might be interrupted by something else.

Note: When using subordinating conjunctions introducing time clauses in sentences about the future, only use the future tense in the main clause.

Incorrect: *After John will finish his homework, I will speak to him.*

Correct: *After John finishes his homework, I will speak to him.*