

Contrast/Concession clauses

They are introduced by subordinating conjunctions like “although, though, even though, whereas, while, even if”. These clauses are used to make two statements, one of which contrasts with the other or makes it seem surprising.

Uses:

- “Although” and “though” mean the same. “Even though” is stronger, more emphatic than “(al)though”:

Although/Though he has plenty of money, he doesn't spend much.

Even though there was a lot of snow, no trains were delayed.

- “Whereas” and “while” are similar. They mean “despite the fact that” or “compared with the fact that”, but “whereas” is more formal:

I like travelling by plane, while/whereas my husband doesn't.

While there was no conclusive evidence, most people thought he was guilty.

He must be about sixty, whereas his wife looks about thirty.

- “Even if” is used to emphasize that, although something may happen or may be true, it will not change a situation:

I wouldn't tell you even if I knew.

Even if she survives, she'll never fully recover.

Word order: concession clauses can have an initial and a final position (i.e. before or after the main clause).

1) subordinating conjunction + subject + verb ..., / subject + main verb ...:

Although he has plenty of money, he doesn't spend much.

2) subject + main verb .../ subordinating conjunction + subject + verb ...:

He doesn't spend much, although he has plenty of money.

* **Notice:** contrast can also be expressed with the **adverb** “though”. When “though” is used as an adverb, it always appears at the end of the sentence:

We were at school together. I haven't seen her for years though.

Contrast is also often expressed with the **adverb** “however”:

This is one possible solution to the problem. However, there are others.

Contrast can also be expressed with the **coordinating conjunctions** “but” and “yet”:

It's an old car, but it's very reliable.

Tom ran well, yet he lost.

Finally, contrast is often expressed with the **prepositions** “despite” and “in spite of”. Being prepositions, they are followed by nouns, object pronouns, or verbs in the -ing form:

Despite her beautiful voice, she never became a singer.

Despite losing, we celebrated.

In spite of the rain, we went out.

In spite of feeling ill, she came to work.

We can also use the expressions “despite the fact that” and “in spite of the fact that”, which finish with the conjunction “that” and are therefore followed by a subject and a verb:

She went to Spain despite the fact that her doctor had told her to rest.

Kelly loved her husband in spite of the fact that he drank too much.