A conjunction is a word or group of words used to connect words, phrases, or clauses.

I. COORDINATING CONJUNCTIONS
Coordinating conjunctions connect words, phrases, or clauses of equal grammatical rank. The precise use of conjunctions is a matter of importance in effective writing. Although and and but are the most commonly used coordinating conjunctions, precise meaning may require the use of one of the other five coordinating conjunctions.

Below is the complete list of coordinating conjunctions. There are no others.
To help you remember them, think of “fanboys”: For, And Nor, But, Or, Yet, So

1. **FOR** expresses a causal relationship - one element is a cause of the other.
   He avoided riding the subway, for he had heard that the schedules were uncertain.

2. **AND** joins elements in order to stress what they have in common.
   I used phonics in learning to read, and so did you.

3. **NOR** is used when the alternative is negative.
   We cannot have peace without arms, nor can we be sure that arms will bring peace.

4. **BUT** is used to emphasize the difference between the elements it joins.
   I shall look at the display, but I warn you I am in no mood to buy.

5. **OR** is used to indicate an alternative.
   We must reduce expenses, or our profits will disappear.

6. **YET** like BUT, emphasizes the differences, but it also suggests that the second element is something we might not ordinarily expect.
   He was told of the dangers of swimming after eating, yet he plunged into the water.

7. **SO** suggests a purpose - the second element is needed because of the first.
   The course was difficult, so I had to study many hours.

II. CORRELATIVE CONJUNCTIONS
Sometimes in order to emphasize the relationship set up by coordinating conjunctions, we reinforce them with other words, forming what are known as correlative conjunctions. The principal correlatives are these:

   both...and    neither...nor    either...or    not only...but also

   *Either they did not receive the notice, or they had other plans.*
   *Not only are the reports incomplete, but they are also incorrect.*
The elements joined by correlatives must be alike in structure, or the force of the correlatives will be lost.

Incorrect: *They are not only tired, but they are disgusted.*  
(Adjective joined with independent clause.)

Correct: *They are not only tired but disgusted.*

Correct: *Not only are they tired, but they are also disgusted.*  
(independent clause with independent cause.)

**III. SUBORDINATING CONJUNCTIONS**

Subordinating conjunctions connect clauses that are of subordinate importance to the independent clause or to some element in the main clause. The following are some of the more common ones:

- because, in that, since  ............... indicates cause
- although, except, though, while  ........ indicates concession
- if, whether  ........................... indicates condition
- as, as if, as though  ..................... indicates manner
- whence, where, wherever  ............... indicates place or direction
- in order that, so, so that, that  ........ indicates purpose
- after, as long as, as soon as,
  - before, since, when  ................. indicates time

Words equivalent to phrases, such as *wherein* (in which), *whereby* (by which), *wherewith* (with which), and *wherefore* (for which) are all subordinating conjunctions.

**IV. CONJUNCTIVE ADVERBS**

Such words are *also, besides, further, however, nevertheless, so thus, hence, thence,* and *therefore* are frequently used as conjunctive adverbs. Since they function as devices for logical transition between sentences and even between paragraphs, they differ from ordinary grammatical connectives. A period or semicolon must be used with the conjunctive adverb to avoid a comma splice.

*I am not at all satisfied with his report of the accident; therefore, I am going to ask him to rewrite it.*

*The streets were so slippery that all public transportation was halted. Hence, all classes were cancelled.*