# Paired conjunctions

## Introduction

**This meal is not only tasty but also nutritious.**

## Definition

**We use paired conjunctions to connect two ideas including nouns, verbs, adjectives or phrases.**

## Construction

**We use them to connect two ideas including nouns, verbs, adjectives or phrases. Here are some examples:**

| I invited | both | Brenda | and | Angela | to the seminar. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Both | Brenda | and | Angela | are going to the seminar. |
| It's available in | either | red | or | blue. | |
| I don't know | whether | to fix it | or | buy a new one. | |

# Construction

**Here are some examples of common constructions:**

| I invited | both | Brenda | and | Angela | to the seminar. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Both | Brenda | and | Angela | are going to the seminar. |
| It's available in | either | red | or | blue. | |
| I don't know | whether | to fix it | or | buy a new one. | |

# Subject verb agreement

**With either...or and neither...nor, the choice of verb depends on whether the first or second person or thing mentioned is singular or plural.**

**When the second noun is singular, a singular verb is preferred but plural verbs are acceptable in conversation.**

**Either the sales manager or the director is going to attend the conference.**

**When the second noun is plural, use a plural verb.**

**Neither the director nor the sales managers are going to attend the conference.**

**When the second noun is singular but the first is plural, you can use a singular or plural verb.**

**Either the sales managers or the director is/are going to attend the conference.**

# Either...or

**Note that when either is not at the beginning of a sentence or clause, we can omit it:**

**It's available in (either) red or blue.**
**We can have the meeting (either) tomorrow or Friday.**

# Not only...but also

**Note that**

1. **We can separate but and also - they don't have to be together in the sentence:**

   **She's not only creative but also good at solving problems.**
   **Or**
   **She's not only creative but she's also good at solving problems.**

2. **We often invert the not only clause:**

   **Not only is she creative but she's also good at solving problems.**

3. **We can use 'too' or 'as well' instead of also. These are placed at the end of a sentence:**

   **She's not only creative but good at solving problems too/as well.**

# Whether...or

**'Whether' has a similar meaning to 'if' and can sometimes be used as an alternative to 'if' when we talk about <u>two</u> possibilities:**

**I'm wondering if/whether we should tell him (or not).**
**It depends if/whether he'll be unhappy about it (or not).**
**I don't know if/whether recruiting more staff is a good idea or not.**
**He can't remember if/whether Aurélie or Olivier is in charge of the account.**

**Whether is preferred to 'if':**

a) **before an infinitive:**

   **I don't know whether <u>to do</u> this now or later.** ✔️
   **I don't know if to do this now or later.** ❌

**Have you decided whether or not to apply for the job?** ✅
**Have you decided if to apply for this job?** ❌

b) **after prepositions such as 'about' or expressions with a similar meaning:**

**There was a lot of disagreement about whether we should re-locate or not.**
**It was a question of whether (or not) to choose the cheapest contractor.**

c) **at the beginning of a sentence:**

**Whether we eat in or go to a restaurant doesn't matter to me - you can choose.**

d) **directly before 'or not':**

**Have you decided whether or not you're coming with us?**
**Have you decided if/whether you're coming with us or not?**

# Examples

**We've got both meat and veggie burgers - which would you like?**

**We can either carry on for an hour or stop now and have lunch.**

**This job is neither challenging nor fun.**

 **Not** just one **but** all four of the children raised their hands.

 We're **not only** going to the mountains **but also** the sea.<?xml:namespace prefix = "o" ns = "urn:schemas-microsoft-com:office:office" />

 I don't know **whether** to have chocolate **or** vanilla.