

Contrast Words and Phrases: Despite, In spite of, Although and Even Though

1. What each one means
2. Their grammar structure
3. How to use them in your own sentences

- “**Despite** her fear of heights, Angela climbed to the roof.”
- What if I said: **Although she was afraid** of heights, Angela climbed to the roof.
- Do you understand what these sentences mean?
- Can you use “despite” and “although” in a sentence?

- Back to my original sentence: “Despite her fear of heights, Angela climbed to the roof.” (photo of me on roof)
- You probably understand that she was afraid of heights/being up high, but she still climbed up to the roof anyway.
- But how does this idea work with “despite”??
- **Despite** is a contrast word. (So is **In spite of**) In this type of sentence, we have two parts, or clauses. We have the “despite” clause (*dependent-not a complete sentence*) and the main clause (independent).
- ***We are contrasting the ideas/thoughts between these two clauses.****
- In the “despite” clause, we know that Angela is afraid of heights---She doesn’t like to be up high or in high places. In the second clause, She climbs to the top of the roof. Does that “fear of heights” stop her??
- NO, it does NOT!! And that’s where the contrast word “despite” comes in: Despite this thing (whatever it may be)---
- ----It can be good OR bad; it doesn’t matter. But it DOES NOT AFFECT whatever is in the main clause. It’s usually something we don’t expect; ***It’s generally about something that would be Unusual, surprising, or unexpected. It’s a little bit unusual or unexpected that Angela climbs the roof successfully knowing that she’s afraid of heights!***
- Despite the rain, I went jogging this morning.
- Despite the traffic, I arrived to work on time.
- In spite of leaving early, I missed the bus.
- **You can switch these clauses; “despite still stays with its contrast clause.”**
- Despite the rain, I want jogging this morning.

- In spite of the rain, I went jogging this morning.
- I went jogging this morning despite the rain.
- I went jogging this morning in spite of the rain.

This brings us to the Grammar:

- “Despite” and “In spite of” are prepositions, so they can follow with a

1. Noun,
2. Gerund (verb-ing)
3. Relative pronoun/clause

Despite + noun/gerund

- **Notice the commas AFTER the contrast clause!**
- Despite the rain, I went jogging....In spite of the rain, I went jogging....
- **You can switch these clauses; “despite still stays with its contrast clause.”**
- Despite the rain, I went jogging this morning.
- In spite of the rain, I went jogging this morning.
- I went jogging this morning despite the rain. (NO commas)
- I went jogging this morning in spite of the rain. (No commas)

Although/Even Though/Though

1. These can be used interchangeably
2. These contrast words have the same meaning as “despite” and “in spite of”
3. We’re still contrasting the dependent clause with the main clause.
4. The difference with “although” and “even though”, “though” is in the grammar structure.
5. “although” and “even though” and “though” are adverb clauses and they need a subject and a verb

Let’s use our original sentence:

6. I cannot say “Although her fear of heights, she climbed to the rooftop.” NO. I would need something like “Although Angela was afraid of heights, she climbed to the rooftop.”

7. "Although the rain, I went jogging this morning." NO. I would need something like
Although it rained, I went jogging this morning. "Although it was raining this morning, I
still went jogging."
8. You can also replace "although" with "even though". "Even though it rained this
morning...."
 - Notice we still use commas when "although, even though and though" clauses are at
the beginning of the sentence.
 - You can switch the clauses too.
 - I went jogging this morning although it was raining.

***Exception:** Sometimes, we **do** see a comma before "although" or "even though" when it's in
the middle of the sentence. This happens if:

- **If there is a strong contrast** between the two parts of a sentence, add a comma before
"although" to separate them.
- She was really sad, **although she had won the championship.**
- I would like playing basketball, **even though** I feel as if I'm not good enough.
- Joe wasn't wearing a coat, **although** it was freezing.
- Mara hates to spend money, **even though** she is rich.
- **No strong contrast:** "Ben stayed at his company **although** he didn't know if he would
get a promotion."
- **But if you're writing and you're not sure, just put the dependent clause first, and use a
comma!**

Sentences:

1. It was raining. I walked home. (although)
2. The rain. I walked home. (In spite of)
3. He read the entire menu. He couldn't decide what he wanted for lunch. (even though)
4. Being much older than the others. He won the race. (despite)

Key Points:

- 1. **Despite, In spite of, Although, and even though** contrast information with the main
clause.
2. We use a **comma** if these clauses come at the **beginning** of the sentence.
 3. You need a subject/verb with **although, even though and though**