Five Useful Ways to Join Ideas

Consider the two following clauses that you would like to join :   - I saw a bird.
                                                                            - It flew off a branch.
The first options that you could use require coordination : the two clauses will remain independent and complete in meaning, but they will be joined in the middle by a coordinating conjunction, or a transitional word, and the necessary punctuation.

	Clause 1 →	**Coordination** →	**Clause 2**
Option 1	Independent clause	,and ,or ,so ,but ,nor ,for ,yet	independent clause
Option 2	Independent clause	;	independent clause
Option 3	Independent clause	; consequently, ; furthermore, ; however, ; in addition, ; indeed, ; moreover ; nevertheless ; then, ; therefore,	independent clause

The next options will require subordination : one of the clauses will become less important than the second, and subordinated in meaning to the other.
The subordination could join the two clauses in the middle, like in the following option :

	Clause 1 →	**Subordination** →	**Clause 2**
Option 4	Independent clause	after although as (as if) because before if (even if) that since unless when (ever) whereas while	dependent clause

The subordination could also be in the beginning of the sentence like in the following option. In that case, you would add a comma between clause one and clause two :

Subordination ➔ Clause 1 & 2

Option 5   After   dependent clause **,** independent clause
                 Although
                 As (As if)
                 Because
                 Before
                 If (Even if)
                 (Noun) that
                 Since
                 Unless
                 Until
                 When (ever)
                 Whereas
                 While

Examples : Option 1- I saw a bird**, but** it flew off the branch.
           Option 2- I saw a bird **;** it flew off the branch.
           Option 3- I saw a bird **; then** it flew off the branch.
           Option 4- I saw a bird **that** flew off the branch.
           Option 5- The bird, **that** I saw, flew off the branch.

Other examples : Option 1- Nancy loved the summer season, and she loved the color blue.
                Option 2- Ralph drove his car to the university ; he was going to attend two of his favorite courses Economics and English.
                Option 3- Naomi refused to clean her room ; indeed she refused to do any of the house chores.
                Option 4- I arrived late to work today because the traffic was awful on the highway.
                Option 5- Even if it will cost me my life, I'll do it.

Note that the following statements are **incorrect** :   - I saw a bird, it flew off the branch.
                                                   - I saw a bird it flew off the branch.
A comma by itself is never enough to join two ideas.
No punctuation at all is also a common mistake called a run-on.

Handout 3.6