

# Contrasts: **although** and **though**; **even though/if**; **in spite of** and **despite**

## A

## Although and though

We use **although** or **though** when we want to say that there is an unexpected contrast between what happened in the *main clause* and what happened in the *adverbial clause*:

- **Although/Though** Reid failed to score himself, he helped Jones score two goals. (or Reid failed to score himself, **but** he helped Jones score two goals.)
- She bought a car, **although/though** she was still too young to learn to drive. (or She was still too young to learn to drive, **but** she bought a car.)

We can usually use either **although** or **though**, but **though** is often less formal. **Though**, but not **although**, can also be used as an adverb to say that the information in a clause contrasts with information in a previous sentence (see also Unit 103):

- I eat most dairy products. I'm not keen on yoghurt, **though**. (not ...although.)
- 'That cheese smells awful!' 'It tastes good, **though**, doesn't it?' (not ...although...)

We can give special emphasis to an adjective or adverb by putting it before **though** or **as**, especially when followed by a linking verb such as **be**, **appear**, **become**, **look**, **seem**, **sound**, **prove**, etc. Notice that in this pattern you can't use **although**. Compare:

- Although/Though the night air was hot, they slept soundly. **and**
- **Hot though** (or **as**) **the night air was**, they slept soundly. (not Hot although the night air...)
- Although/Though it may seem extraordinary, London had less rain than Rome. **and**
- **Extraordinary though** (or **as**) **it may seem**, London had less rain than Rome. (not Extraordinary although it may seem...)

**Much as** is used in a similar way before a clause, particularly to talk about how we feel about someone or something:

- **Much as** I enjoyed the holiday, I was glad to be home. (= Although I enjoyed...)

## B

## Even though and even if

We can use **even though** (but not 'even although') to mean 'despite the fact that' (see also Unit 103) and **even if** to mean 'whether or not'. Compare:

● <b>Even though</b> Tom doesn't speak Spanish, I think he should still visit Madrid.	= Despite the fact that he doesn't speak Spanish	i.e. The speaker knows that Tom doesn't speak Spanish
● <b>Even if</b> Tom doesn't speak Spanish, I think he should still visit Madrid.	= Whether or not he speaks Spanish	i.e. The speaker doesn't know definitely whether Tom speaks Spanish or not

## C

## In spite of and despite

We can use **in spite of** + **-ing** with a similar meaning to 'although':

- **In spite of playing** with ten men, we won easily. (= Although we played with ten men...)
- **In spite of being** full of water, the boat sailed on. (= Although the boat was full...)

**In spite of** can also be followed by a noun:

- **In spite of their poverty**, the children seemed happy. (= Although they were poor...)

Notice that **despite** is often used instead of **in spite of**, particularly in written English:

- **Despite falling / In spite of falling** midway through the race, she won.

**Despite** and **in spite of** are never followed by a clause with a finite verb. So, for example, you can't say 'Despite / In spite of she fell midway through the race...'. However, you can use a clause with a finite verb after **the fact that**:

- **Despite / In spite of the fact that** she fell midway through the race, she won.

**Even though** and **even so** ⇒ UNIT 103

- 98.1 Match the sentence halves and give special emphasis to the adjective by moving it to the front of the sentence, as in 1. Use either **though** or **as**. (A)

- |                              |   |
|------------------------------|---|
| 1 the injury was serious     | a she always buys me a birthday present.                |
| 2 the results seem unlikely  | b there is still room for improvement.                  |
| 3 she was tired              | c <del>it didn't keep her out of the game.</del>        |
| 4 she is poor                | d they are nevertheless correct.                        |
| 5 the invention is ingenious | e Sandra walked home.                                   |
| 6 the building was huge      | f nobody will ever buy it.                              |
| 7 they were outnumbered      | g they put up a good performance.                       |
| 8 the food is excellent      | h it wasn't sufficiently vast to hold the city library. |

Example: 1 + (c) Serious **though/as** the injury was, it didn't keep her out of the game.



- 98.2 Underline the correct phrase. (B)

- 1 This shirt is still dirty *even though* / *even if* I've washed it twice.
- 2 *Even though* / *Even if* he loses the election, the president will still control foreign policy.
- 3 They drank from the stream *even though* / *even if* they knew it was polluted.
- 4 I'll continue to sing my songs *even if* / *even though* I never sell another record.
- 5 We will go ahead with the project *even though* / *even if* our partners pull out.
- 6 I enjoy going to discos *even if* / *even though* I don't like dancing.
- 7 After Barlow was arrested, his wife and daughters were questioned by the police *even though* / *even if* they knew nothing about his business affairs.
- 8 *Even if* / *Even though* the building was in perfect condition, it would still be impossible to use it for modern offices.

- 98.3 Rewrite the sentences using **In spite of + ing**. (C)

- 1 Although she is an accountant, she never seems to have any money. **In spite of being an accountant, she never seems to have any money.**
- 2 Although he lost a lot of blood, he is in a stable condition.
- 3 Although she had a bad cough, she was able to sing in the choir.

Now rewrite these sentences using **In spite of his/her + noun**.

- 4 Although she was successful, she felt dissatisfied.
- 5 Although Patrick was ill, he still came to the meeting.
- 6 Although he promised that he wouldn't be late, he didn't arrive until 9 o'clock.

- 98.4 Use your own ideas to complete these sentences. Write about what you missed or what was disappointing when you went on a holiday or trip abroad. (A, B, & C)

- 1 Much as I liked the snow, it was good to get back to some warm weather.
- 2 ...though it was, ...
- 3 Even though..., ...
- 4 Despite..., I...