"Because," "Due To," "Since," and "As"

English offers many ways to express “because.” Some are wordy and should be avoided due to the fact that they are wordy. (Did you get that? We just made a joke!) Others, like “since” and “as,” need to be used carefully, since you could confuse your readers.

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Today we’re looking at various ways to say “because,” including “due to,” “since,” and “as.”

**Wordy Ways to Say “Because”**

First, let’s disparage all the wordy ways to express the meaning “because.”

There are quite a few: “due to the fact that,” “owing to the fact that,” “on account of,” and “on the grounds that,” for example. If you use “because” instead of those beasts, you can save up to four words.

You should also avoid “the reason is because.” For example, a redundant but romantic windbag might say, “The reason I love you is because of your kindness.” Why not be concise and romantic instead? Just say, “I love you because you’re kind.” Some people might prefer “the reason is that,” but that is also wordy.

Now let’s discuss “due to” and “because.” As happens so often these days, there’s a traditional way and a rebel way. The traditional view is that you should use “due to” only as an adjective, usually following the verb “to be” (1). For example, if you say, “The cancelation was due to rain,” the words “due to” modify “cancelation.” That sentence is a bit stilted, but it fits the traditionalist rule.

If you wanted to be more casual, you could say, “It was canceled because of rain.” According to purists, you’re not allowed to say, “It was canceled due to rain” because “due to” doesn’t have anything to modify. It’s acting like a preposition in that sentence, and purists argue that “due to” is an adjective; it shouldn’t be a compound preposition.

But most of us aren’t thinking about adjectives and compound prepositions when we speak, so it may be difficult to know when you’re
using "due to" as an adjective. The Chicago Manual of Style (2) suggests using "due to" when you can replace it with "attributable to," but not when you could use "because of." Further, Patricia O'Connor, in her book "Woe Is I" (3), proposes replacing "due to" with "caused by" or "resulting from." She explains that if a sentence begins with "due to," as in "Due to inclement weather, school was canceled," the sentence is "probably wrong."

So if you find yourself agreeing with traditionalists—or if your writing will be judged by one—use "due to" if you can substitute "attributable to," "caused by," or "resulting from." And don't use it at the beginning of a sentence.

Now let's be rebellious. Fowler's Modern English Usage points out that the objection to "due to" as a compound preposition is "an entirely 20c phenomenon, but it begins to look as if this use of 'due to' will form part of the natural language of the 21c" (4). The American Heritage Guide to Contemporary Usage and Style (5) agrees, stating that "The tide has turned toward accepting 'due to' as a full-fledged preposition," and Garner's Modern English Usage describes such use as "virtually universal" (1).

"If you're a purist, avoid “due to” as a compound preposition, but understand that the majority may soon be against you."

After reviewing the evidence, we say if you're a purist, avoid "due to" as a compound preposition, but understand that you're in the minority. Whichever way you feel about "due to," remember that our easy-to-use friend "because" is often standing at attention thinking, "You could use me. Pick me! Pick me!"

Other Times to Use "Due to"

You don't have to ban "due to" completely. This phrase can mean "payable to" or "supposed to" (6). For example, you could say, "I ask that you pay what is due to me." Here, you are asking for money that someone owes you. You could also say, "The plane is due to arrive at noon," meaning the plane should arrive at 12.

"Since" or "Because"?

Strict grammarians may not like it (7), but "since" and "because" can be synonyms (1, 8). "Since I love you, let's get married" means the same thing as "Because I love you, let's get married." (Yes, you can use "because" at the beginning of a sentence.)

Fussy grammarians might be a teensy bit right in some cases, though. The word "since" often refers to how much time has passed, as in "Since yesterday, all I've thought about is you." Sometimes, a sentence with "since" can be interpreted in two ways, and that is when you should avoid using "since" to mean "because." Take this ambiguous sentence:

"Since they spoke, she's had second thoughts." ("Since" could mean "from the time that they spoke" or "because they spoke.")

A similar problem arises with the word "as," which can also mean "because," so keep those little grammarians perched on your shoulder to make sure you don't write an ambiguous sentence. Granted, it is hard to know when you're being unintentionally ambiguous. Spend some time away from your writing and then look at it again with fresh eyes, or you could always rope in a friend.

Summary

To sum up, English offers many ways to express "because." Some are wordy and should be avoided due to the fact that they are wordy. (Did you get that? We just made a joke!) Others, like "since" and "as," need to be used carefully, since you could confuse your readers.

The Curious Case of the Misplaced Modifier & The Grammar Devotional

This podcast was written by Bonnie Trenga, author of The Curious Case of the Misplaced Modifier, who blogs at sentencesleuth.blogspot.com.

References

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**Web Bonus for Teachers**

**Extra example sentences**

Bad Sentence: *The reason* Squiggly ate chocolate *was because* he was nervous. ["The reason...was because" is redundant.]

Better Sentence: Squiggly ate chocolate because he was nervous.

Bad Sentence: *The reason* Aardvark likes to fish *is because* it's peaceful at the lake. ["The reason...is because" is redundant.]

Better Sentence: Aardvark likes to fish because it's peaceful at the lake.

Bad Sentence: Squiggly objected to fish for dinner *on the grounds that* it would make the campsite smelly. ["On the grounds that" is wordy.]

Better Sentence: Squiggly objected to fish for dinner because it would make the campsite smelly.

Bad Sentence: Aardvark was late for work *due to* his broken alarm clock. [The sentence breaks the traditionalist rule that "due to" is only used as an adjective.]

Better Sentence: Aardvark was late for work because his alarm clock is broken.

Bad Sentence: *Since* the peeves attacked Squiggly, people have been thinking that the town needs a sheriff. ["Since" is ambiguous; it could mean "since the time that" or "because."]

Better Sentence 1: Because the peeves attacked Squiggly, people have been thinking that the town needs a sheriff.

Better Sentence 2: Ever since the peeves attacked Squiggly, people have been thinking that the town needs a sheriff.
Can You Start a Sentence with "Because"?

Grammar Girl
Don't use commas in names that are followed by "Jr." or a numeral.
IF YOU DON'T WANT SIR FRAGALOT TO COME VISIT, WRITE COMPLETE SENTENCES.
When to Use a Comma with "Too"

From the Web

The Little Girl from 'Mrs Doubtfire' is 31 Now and Gorgeous

The Many Ways People Unknowingly Destroy Their Lives
As, since and because are conjunctions. They are followed by clauses. Because of is a preposition. It is followed by a noun. Continue >>. 5. She didn’t love cats …. she wasn’t happy when her husband bought two kittens home. as. so. since. 9. Due to the bad weather, we cancelled the trip. 10. As I was having a nice time, I decided to stay longer. 11. As it was very cold, he put on his coat. 12. She couldn’t walk because she had broken her leg. 315shares. Facebook. Twitter. Share. What is the difference between Due To and Because Of – Due to is used in the sense of ‘on account of.’ Because of is used in the sense of ‘for the reason that.’ In written English, these two expressions are substituted by the expressions ‘on account of’ and ‘as a consequence of’. What does Due To mean? The expression due to is generally used in the sense of ‘on account of.’ Take a look at the two sentences given below. The match was abandoned due to heavy rain. The villagers suffered due to famine. In both the sentences, the expression due to is used in the sense of ‘on account of.’ Hence the meaning of the first sentence would be ‘the match was abandoned on account of heavy rain’, and the meaning of the second sentence would be ‘the villagers suffered As, because and since all introduce subordinate clauses. They connect the result of something with its reason. result. reason. He decided to go to the conference in Barcelona, as he was in Spain anyway. As and since are more formal than because. We usually put a comma before since after the main clause: [result] I hope they’ve decided to come as [reason] I wanted to hear about their India trip. [result] They’re rather expensive, since [reason] they’re quite hard to find. We often use as and since clauses at the beginning of the sentence. We use a comma after the as- or since-clause: Since everything can be done from home with computers and telephones, there’s no need to dress up for work any more. As everyone already knows each other, there’s no need for introductions.