



Mountain marathon goes ahead despite worst July weather in ten years.

In spite of repeated warnings of bad weather, the annual mountain marathon went ahead as planned. And although more than half of the runners failed to complete the course due to the wet conditions, the winner, Matthew Goldy of Bethesda, managed to set a new record, running the race in a little over two hours and 40 minutes.

Presentation

Use *although, despite* and *in spite of* to contrast two situations and to say that something is surprising or unexpected:

They had the worst July weather in ten years. The race went ahead as planned. → **Despite** the worst July weather in ten years, the race went ahead as planned. (It is surprising that the race took place, considering the weather conditions.)

although, though, even though

Although, though and *even though* are conjunctions. You use them to join two sentences. They can be used at the beginning of the sentence, in which case the clause is followed by a comma, or in the middle of a sentence, in which case no comma is needed:

Although they knew it was going to rain, the race went ahead as planned.

The race went ahead even though they knew it was going to rain.

Though is slightly less formal than *although*. You use it in the same way as *although*, with the same meaning:

Though they knew it was going to rain, the race still took place.

You can also use it at the end of a sentence. This use is more frequent in informal speech:

They knew it was going to rain. The race still took place, though.

When you use *though* at the end of the sentence, use a comma before it to separate it from the rest of the clause.

Use *even* to strengthen and emphasise *though* (but not *although*):

Even though they knew it was going to rain, that didn't stop the race.

They didn't take any dry clothes even though they knew it was going to rain.

You cannot use *although* or *even though* at the end of a sentence.

despite, in spite of

Despite and *in spite of* are prepositions. They are followed by a noun, pronoun or the *-ing* form of the verb:

Despite the weather, the winner set a new record.

The winner set a new record in spite of the weather.

Despite / In spite of running the whole race in a storm, the winner set a new record.

Despite / In spite of this, the winner set a new record.

You can also use *despite* and *in spite of* with *the fact that* + clause:

Despite / In spite of the fact that it rained heavily throughout the race, the winner set a new record.

When *despite* or *in spite of* comes at the beginning of the sentence, the clause is followed by a comma. In the middle of a sentence, no comma is needed.

1 Add the linking words in brackets to the sentences. Add commas where necessary.

- Although
- 1 He fell once or twice before reaching the finishing line, he still completed the race. (although)
 - 2 We really enjoyed our holidays the awful weather. (despite)
 - 3 I felt really tired the next morning I'd had a good night's sleep. (even though)
 - 4 The fact that more than half of the runners didn't actually complete the race it was still a huge success. (in spite of)
 - 5 The job's well paid it's not particularly challenging. (although)
 - 6 All the talk of reform and modernisation nothing has really changed. (despite)

2  **Choose the correct linking word. Then listen and check.**

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SURPRISE VICTORY FOR CITY
Fans were celebrating last night after City beat United 4-0 ¹*despite / although* missing some of their key players.

FAMILY CAUGHT IN SUMMER STORM
A family of five were rescued by coastguards yesterday off the coast of Pembroke. The Davis family had insisted on taking their boat out, ²*in spite of / even though* they had been given repeated warnings about the possibility of a summer storm.

ELECTION RESULTS QUESTIONED AMID FEARS OF CORRUPTION
³*Although / Despite* the fact that the election met all legal and democratic requirements, the main opposition party has called for an international enquiry.

REFERENDUM RULED OUT
The government has confirmed that it will not hold a referendum ⁴*despite / even though* strong popular support.

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3 Join the two sentences using the word or words in bold.

- 1 We have worked together for more than five years. I don't really know him that well.
despite
- 2 We hardly ever go to the beach. We live near the coast.
although
- 3 They have had a lot of problems. He still loves her.
in spite of
- 4 The concert was cancelled. We had a great time last night.
even though
- 5 He failed all his exams. He worked really hard.
despite