

PARALLELISM

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Parallelism in writing uses the same word patterns in words, phrases, or clauses for balance and consistency. Using the same structural pattern shows that these words, phrases, or clauses have equal importance.

<p>When listing words in a series, be sure to use consistent parts of speech: nouns, adjectives, or adverbs.</p>	<p>I like walking, swimming, and skiing. (nouns) Irene's friend was tall, dark, and handsome. (adjectives) Please speak slowly, distinctly, and accurately. (adverbs)</p>
<p>Be consistent when using gerunds, infinitives or prepositional phrases.</p>	<p>I like walking, swimming, and skiing. (gerunds) We like to walk, to swim, and to ski. (infinitives) The wire from the generator ran up the wall, into the window, and across the floor. (prepositional phrases)</p>
<p>Use parallel structure in lists of sentences or clauses.</p>	<p>I cleaned the kitchen. I dressed the children. I left the house. (sentences) He packed his bag, he drove to the station, and he took the first train out of town. (clauses)</p>
<p>Use parallel structure in comparisons or contrasts.</p>	<p>Elephants are heavy mammals and ostriches are huge birds. Jim's truck is bigger, but Nancy's car is quieter.</p>
<p>Certain connectors are require parallel structure: both...and either...or not only...but also neither...nor whether... or</p> <p>The words, phrases, or clauses in each part must be parallel.</p>	<p>Both diet and exercise are important to your health. He lost his book either behind the school or above the church. I am not only tired but also hungry. Neither Pat nor Joanne knows what happened. Whether she goes or she stays is up to her.</p>

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LEARN MORE

Don't forget: students can always ask tutors or their teachers for an explanation of anything that's not clear.

Texts available to use in the SLC English Writing Lab:

<i>Grassroots with Readings</i> , Ninth Edition Susan Fawcett Chapter 25	<i>Evergreen, A Guide to Writing with Readings</i> , Ninth Edition, Susan Fawcett Chapter 21	<i>The Bedford Handbook</i> , Seventh Edition, Diana Hacker Chapter 9
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Online:

[Using Parallel Structure](#)

[Parallel Construction](#)

[Parallel Construction](#)

[Parallel Structure](#)

[Grassroots Companion Site](#)

[Evergreen Companion Site](#)

[Self-Test Parallel Structure](#)

[Problems with Parallel Structure](#)

[Parallel Structure Exercises](#)

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PRACTICE

Underline the parallel elements in the following sentences:

1. Last weekend I went camping, canoeing, and hiking.
2. Will you promise either to call me or to write me at least once a week after you move?
3. Ronda volunteered her tutoring services both at the public library and at Lake View Elementary School.
4. Either I will perform in the concert on Tuesday, or Michel will.
5. Would you rather wake up early in the morning or sleep in?

Correct the errors in parallelism in the following sentences:

1. Have you either seen *Flushed Away* or *Monsters, Inc.*?
2. By the end of the week, you should have finished the novel and write the book report.
3. I am repairing the dresser, the chair, and also fixing the nightstand.
4. Jared likes to jog every morning, playing basketball every afternoon, and studying every evening.
5. Colette trained the new employee to file the paper work, Stephen showed him how to answer the phone, and he was shown how to make coffee by Eric.