



Parallel structure means putting a **series** of words, phrases, or clauses in the **same grammatical form**. This helps a sentence read more smoothly and create a sense of flow.

Parallelism occurs in **three** instances:

1. **Words**- parallel words have the same part of speech and are in the same tense.

a. ✓ Correct:

Renee enjoys reading, painting, and listening to music.

b. ✗ Incorrect:

Renee enjoys reading, to paint, and listen to music.

2. **Phrases**- parallel phrases maintain similar parts of speech, verb tense, and **word order**.

a. ✓ Correct:

Every Sunday Amanda waters the flowers, reads a good book, and watches cooking shows.

b. ✗ Incorrect:

Every Sunday Amanda watered the flowers, reads a book that is good, and watched cooking shows.

3. **Clauses**- parallel clauses maintain similar word order, tense, and **structure**. The use of **pronouns and prepositions** must also be **consistent** throughout the sentence.

a. ✓ Correct:

Jasmine is a student *who* never misses class, *who* always does the reading, and *who* asks thoughtful questions in class.

Jasmine is a student *who* never misses class, always does the reading, and asks thoughtful questions in class.

b. ✗ Incorrect:

Jasmine is a student *who* never misses class, always does the reading, and *who* asks thoughtful questions in class.



Practice

Identify whether the follow sentences correctly demonstrate parallelism by labeling them either **C** for correct or **IC** for incorrect. Correctly rewrite those that are incorrect.

- _____ 1. Jaspreet is fluent in Spanish, French, and Italian.
- _____ 2. Martin writes clearly, directly, and without any errors.
- _____ 3. Regular exercise helps to manage weight, increase energy, and fights off stress.
- _____ 4. Allison is the type of friend who gives good advice, who is supportive, and always has your back.
- _____ 5. Reading fluently, writing well, and clearly speaking are all important language skills.
- _____ 6. Baking a cake involves assembling, mixing, and cooking the ingredients.
- _____ 7. Solomon is the type of driver who is courteous, who is cautious, and who is calculating.
- _____ 8. Doing well in class requires that students attend lectures, takes notes that are thorough, and studying for exams.
- _____ 9. Tam enjoyed playing volleyball more than she swam, and went on to compete at the national level.
- _____ 10. Many of the technological advances of the twenty-first century have had far reaching effects on society, including the decline of postal services thanks to e-mail, the disappearance of land-lines thanks to cell phones, the reduction in using checks thanks to credit cards, and the increase in digital publication thanks to the Internet.

Find out more. Search the web or a grammar book for **parallelism** or **parallel structure**.

Incorrect:

3. Regular exercise helps to manage weight, increase energy, and fight off stress.
4. Allison is the type of friend who gives good advice, who is supportive, and who always has your back.
5. Reading fluently, writing well, and speaking clearly are all important language skills.
8. Doing well in class requires that students attend lectures, take thorough notes, and study for exams.
9. Tam enjoyed playing volleyball more than swimming, and went on to compete at the national level.
10. ... the disappearance of land-lines thanks to cell phones, the reduction of check use thanks to credit cards, and the increase in digital publication thanks to the Internet.