

Parallelism



What is parallelism?

When you write a sentence that uses the same form for more than one word, phrase, or clause, that sentence has a parallel structure.

How do writers use parallel structures in their writing?

Parallelism can often make sentences easier to understand, because it signals to the reader that the things or ideas in the sentence are separate but relate and are equally important. Parallelism is useful when you need to group things or ideas together in such a way that the reader will see how they relate to each other. This could be when you are listing or categorizing items, explaining an ordered process, emphasizing a pattern, or contrasting ideas or actions.

What are some examples of parallelism?

Parallel Words

Park rules prohibit cigarettes, alcohol, and campfires.

Parallel Phrases

This food processor can dice vegetables, puree fruit, and blend liquids.

Parallel Clauses

As a sales associate, I corresponded with current customers and I provided product demonstrations for potential customers.

How can writers edit for parallelism?

When editing your writing, look for places where you have lists of words or two or more phrases to see if they follow a similar structure. Carefully using parallel structures will allow you to achieve an extra level of clarity in your writing and will allow to lend a little more style to your sentences as well.