

Parallelism

Definition of parallelism

The balance between two or more similar words, phrases or clauses is called parallelism in grammar.

Parallelism is also called parallel structure or a parallel construction. Parallel construction prevents awkwardness, promotes clarity and improves writing style and readability.

Examples

1. I learned to be attentive to my teachers and to do my homework. ✓

I learned to be attentive to my teachers and I do my homework. ✗

2. Complaints were made by teachers and administrators also. ✗

Complaints were made by teachers and administrators. ✓

3. I advise you to sleep early, eat healthy food and exercise regularly. ✓

I advise you to sleep early, eat healthy food and to exercise regularly. ✗

4. She was known for her beauty and generous. ✗

She was known for her beauty and generosity. ✓

5. He played basketball, had a shower and gone to school. ✗

He played basketball, had a shower and went to school. ✓

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(1 mark)

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Examples:

- Nancy likes *playing the piano, the trumpet and play the guitar*. X
Nancy likes *the piano, the trumpet and the guitar*.
Nancy likes *playing the piano, the trumpet and the guitar*.
- She *played basketball, had a shower and gone to school*. X
She *played basketball, had a shower and went to school*.
- You *can apply to the job by filling this form or apply by telephone*. X
You *can apply to the job by filling this form or you can apply by telephone*.

Rules of parallelism

1. Parallelism is used to balance nouns with nouns, prepositional phrases with prepositional phrases, participles with participles, infinitives with infinitives, clauses with clauses.
2. Parallelism is used with elements joined by coordinating conjunctions. *for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so*
My mother likes *cooking and to read*. X
My mother likes *cooking and reading*
3. Parallelism is used with elements in lists or in a series.
This task can be done *individually, in pairs, or can be done in groups of four*. X
This task can be done *individually, in pairs, or in groups of four*.
4. Parallelism is used with elements being compared. *infinitive*
She is mad about *watching TV more than to read a book*. X
She is mad about *watching TV more than reading a book*. *Participle* — *Past / Present*
5. Parallelism is used with elements joined by a linking verb or a form of be. *Connect the subject to the verb*
To learn is *understanding the world*. X
To learn is *to understand the world*. *To add additional info about the subject*
6. Parallelism is used with elements joined by linking words.
The teacher not only wants his students *to keep quiet but also to do the task*. X
The teacher wants his students *not only to keep quiet but also to do the task*.

1) Tom has
 a beautiful wife, a big house and
 has lovely children,
 a beautiful wife, a big house and
 lovely children.

2) Complaints were made by
 teachers and administrators
 also
 Teachers and administrators

3) I learned
 to be attentive to my teachers and to do my
 homework

4) She was known
 to be attentive to my teachers and I
 do my homework
 for her beauty and generous
 for her beauty & generosity.

5) I advise you
 to sleep early, eat healthy food
 and exercise regularly,

6) I hate
 to sleep early, eat healthy food
 and to exercise regularly
 washing the linen by hand and to cook
 washing the linen by hand and cooking.

7) I consider your behaviour
 rude, irresponsible, and
 I think it is offensive
 rude, irresponsible
 and offensive