

Parallelism

What is Parallelism?

Parallelism in grammar is defined as two or more phrases or clauses in a sentence that have the same grammatical structure. Conversely, a **mixed construction** refers to a sentence that has faulty parallelism, i.e., it does not make sense.

Rules for Parallelism

There are five notable rules for constructing parallel sentences.

Rule #1

Use coordinating conjunctions to join together words or phrases of equal grammatical rank.

- *Your company and what its potential is are of great value to me.* (Incorrect)
- *Your company and its potential are of great value to me.* (Correct)

Rule #2

Use parallel structure with elements in lists or in a series.

- *The tribes emphasized collective survival, mutual aid, and being responsible for one another.* (Incorrect)
- *The tribes emphasized collective survival, mutual aid, and responsibility for one another.* (Correct)

Rule #3

Use parallel structures with elements being compared.

- *I like swimming better than to drive.* (Incorrect)
- *I like swimming better than driving.* (Correct)

Rule #4

Use parallel structure with elements joined by a linking verb or a verb of being.

- *To succeed is opening a new opportunity.* (Incorrect)
- *To succeed is to open a new opportunity.* (Correct)

Rule #5

Use parallel structure with elements joined by a correlative conjunction (usually suggesting a reciprocal relationship).

- *Clara not only wants money but also fame.* (Incorrect)
- *Clara wants not only money but also fame.* (Correct)
- *Clara not only wants money but also wants fame.* (Correct)

Exercises

Group A

1. She learned the value of patience, being committed, and loyalty.
2. They visited the zoo, they ate at restaurants, and stayed in a nice hotel.
3. His story was neither confusing nor did it bore me.
4. You can either come with us or staying home is also an option.
5. William is known for his good looks, sense of humor, and he's also wealthy.

Group B

1. Mike likes to listen to rock music and reading mystery novels.
2. Julia is in charge of stocking the shelves, writing orders, and to sell computers.
3. My grandfather's favorite pastime is to eat in trendy restaurants and visiting art galleries.
4. While in France, my nephew spent his time studying French, working in a restaurant, and he jogged along the Seine River every morning.
5. Joan decided to paint her office, to add some new curtains, and that the rug needs dry cleaning.

Group C

1. She decided to leave her job and travelling the world.
2. When I wake up I like either walking the dog or to go for a jog.
3. I would describe her as intelligent, caring, and thinking.
4. He suggested that we go for a meal then we should see a film.
5. Spain is a place where you can eat cheap food and soaking up the sun.

 Group D

1. My mother taught me to speak with kindness, to act with courage, and live purposefully.
2. We could ask them to sit a bit longer, to have some snacks and they should not disturb Ginger the cat.
3. Rafa delivered his speech with confidence and enthusiastically.
4. The workshop will cover topics such as time management, effective communication, and how to manage stress.
5. The room was beautiful, the service was impeccable and I've tasted the best food.

 Group E

1. I attended a conference, weddings, and a bar mitzvah last summer.
2. I taught my dog to speak, sitting, and rolling.
3. Either Jasmine will study chemical engineering or anthropology.
4. Although Richard's inheritance is substantial, it is still smaller than his sister.
5. Ruthie always knew that her pumpkin pie recipe was better than Aunt Sally.

 Group F

1. The veterinarian examined the lab results, consulted with a colleague, and he also studied the stool specimen under a microscope before meeting with the owner of the expensive bulldog.
2. Miranda's flowers are neither red, nor are they orange.
3. Jose's daughter will either attend Harvard, or she plans to go to the Stanford.
4. You are not only responsible for organizing the conference, but we also want you to introduce the keynote speaker.
5. Declining trees have a higher probability of branch failures and of dying prematurely.