

Writing Tip: Parallel Structure

Using parallel structure in a few of your sentences is an easy way to organize clear thoughts, communicate lots of information and produce a stylish sentence that reads well.

Examples:

The three main causes of air pollution in Busan are **exhaust from** vehicles, **soot from** industry smokestacks, and **dust from** construction sites.

I asked middle school students about their hobbies. Most girls said they enjoy **eating** ice cream, **shopping** for new pencils and **chatting** on the internet.

Do not mix forms. For example, do not do this:

Not Parallel: Mary likes cooking, skating and **to ride** a motorcycle.

But this is okay: Mary likes cooking, skating and **riding** a motorcycle.

Exercise 1: Complete the sentences with parallel structure.

- 1 With no job, money or _____, the student had to drop out of school.
- 2 Because I used a computer to write my research paper, I could easily correct spelling errors, move paragraphs around to achieve better organization and _____.
- 3 While I was in college, I worked as a waitress, as a typist, and _____.
- 4 She is a woman known for her integrity, generosity and _____.
- 5 The professor walked through the door, looked at the students, and _____.
- 6 A farmer spends his life tilling the soil, sowing the seeds, and _____.
- 7 I was surprised to learn that, in person, the lead singer of 2PM was warm, friendly and _____.

Exercise 2: Rewrite these sentences. Fix the nonparallel elements.

1. She is bi-lingual, intelligent, and a regular reader of my weekly newspaper column.
2. He was handsome, brave, and the sort of person who would do anything for you.
3. I was afraid of the river. It had a fast current, big waves and it was cold.
4. That high school has many rules. Students need to wear uniforms, arrive before 8am and they can't bring their Smartphone to school.
5. The room was beautiful, the service impeccable, and I've never tasted better food in my entire life.
6. You are responsible for organizing the conference, and we want you to introduce the keynote speaker.
7. Being a nurse is a good career because of the high salary, vacations and schedules.
8. It is dangerous to be living in this world today because of war, unemployment and not enough money.
9. Cooking and eating at home is a good idea for students because it is saves time, money and it is easy to do.
10. After the rafting trip, we ate a delicious lunch, admired the beautiful sunset and left.