

Parallel Structure

“At the strictly grammatical level, parallel structure means using the same pattern of words to show that two or more ideas have the same level of importance. This can happen at the word, phrase, or clause level. The usual way to join parallel structures is with the use of coordinating conjunctions such as "and" or "or" (<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/623/01/>).

Example:

Not Parallel:

I spent two hours with Ms. Smith, **reviewing** my job performance, **evaluating** my goals, **and my future with the company was also discussed**.

Parallel:

I spent two hours with Ms. Smith, **reviewing** my job performance, **evaluating** my goals, and **discussing** my future with the company.

<http://www.methodist.edu/english/parallel.pdf>

Example:

Not Parallel:

The coach told the players **that they should get** a lot of sleep, **that they should not eat** too much, and **to do** some warm-up exercises before the game.

Parallel:

The coach told the players **that they should get** a lot of sleep, **that they should not eat** too much, and **that they should do** some warm-up exercises before the game.

— or —

Better Parallelism:

The coach told the players that they should **get** a lot of sleep, not **eat** too much, and **do** some warm-up exercises before the game.

<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/623/01/>

Excerpt to Illustrate Parallel Structure

But in truth, the world is constantly shifting: shape and size, location in space. It's got edges and chasms, too many to count. They open up, close, reappear somewhere else. Geologists may have mapped out the planet's tectonic plates -hidden shelves of rock that grind, one against the other, forming mountains, creating continents - but they can't plot the fault lines that run through our heads, divide our hearts.

The map of the world is always changing; sometimes it happens overnight. All it takes is the blink of an eye, the squeeze of a trigger, a sudden gust of wind. Wake up and your life is perched on a precipice; fall asleep, it swallows you whole.

The more I saw, however, the more I needed to see. I tried to settle down back home in Los Angeles, but I missed that feeling, that rush. I went to see a doctor about it. He told me I should slow down for a while, take a break. I just nodded and left, booked a flight out that day. It didn't seem possible to stop.

No one seemed to understand. I'd go to movies, see friends, but after a couple days I'd catch myself reading plane

schedules, looking for something, someplace to go: a bomb in Afghanistan, a flood in Haiti. I'd become a predator, endlessly gliding in saltwater seas, searching for the scent of blood.

— Anderson Cooper, *Dispatches from the Edge: A Memoir of War, Disasters, and Survival*