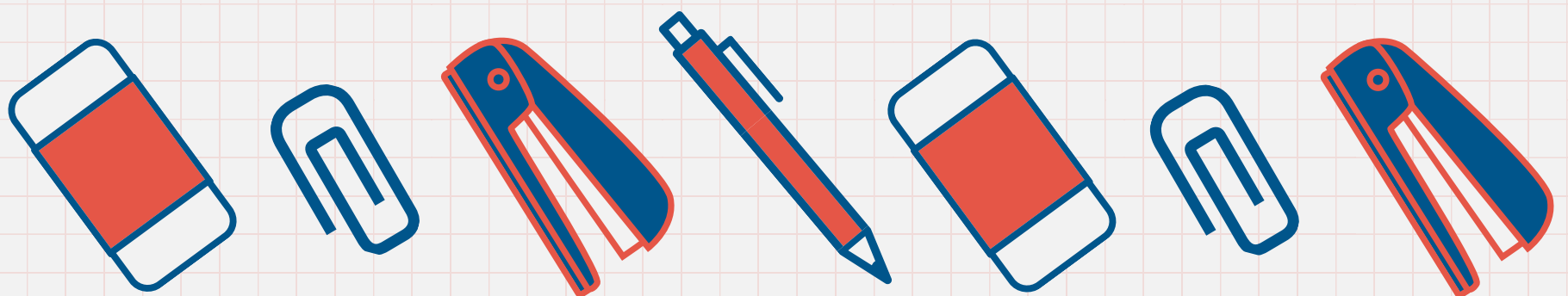
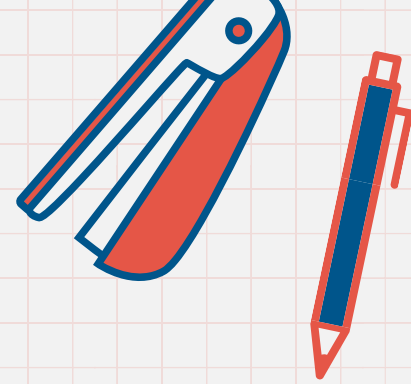
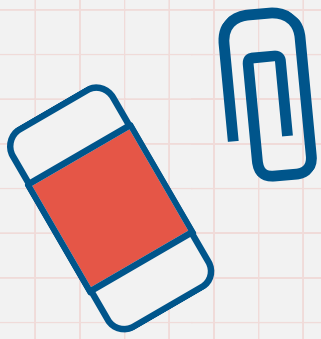


UNIVERSITY WRITING CENTER

PARALLEL STRUCTURE



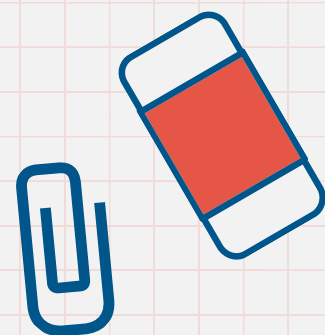
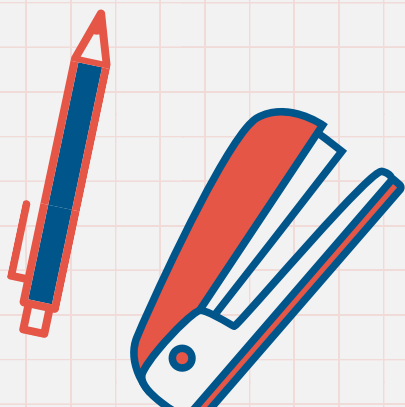


OVERVIEW

WHAT IS PARALLEL STRUCTURE (A.K.A PARALLELISM)?

Parallel structure is the repetition of a grammatical form within a sentence in order to improve readability.

Parallel structure can help you be more concise, make your sentences flow better, and give priority to important details.





SAMPLE #1



Non-Parallel Structure:

Carlos enjoys running, painting, and to eat.

Explanation:

↖ No "-ing"

This sentence lists three things that Carlos enjoys. Notice that "running" and "eating" are not in the same form as "to eat".

If we change the last verb to match the others, the sentence will flow more smoothly.

Parallel Structure:

Carlos enjoys running, painting, and eating.

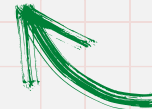
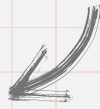
↖ Added
"-ing"



SAMPLE #2

Non-parallel Structure:

Monica was upset about crashing her car and she also felt embarrassed.



"upset" &
"embarrassed"
are too far apart

Explanation:

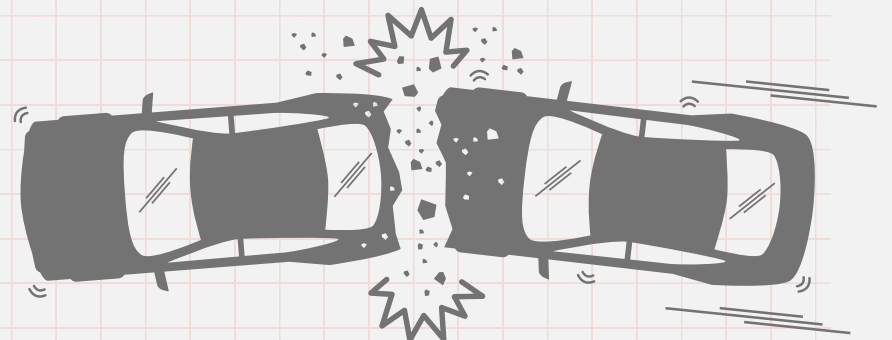
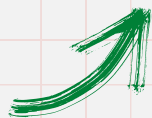
Monica has two similar feelings about the same event, so those feelings should be listed together.

Doing this cuts down on wordiness and makes the overall point of the sentence easier to follow.

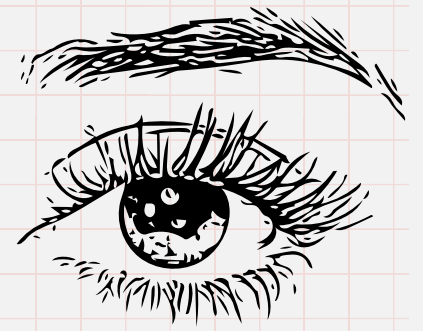
Parallel Structure:

Monica was upset and embarrassed about crashing her car.

"upset" &
"embarrassed"
are closer

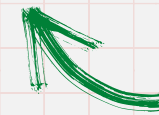


SAMPLE #3



Non-Parallel Structure:

Drug side effects may include blurry vision, blindness,
or teary eyes.



Random order
of effects

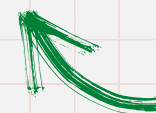
Explanation:

Parallelism in writing may also mean listing items in the degree of importance. The worst side effect of the drug is obviously blindness, and it should be the last item listed.

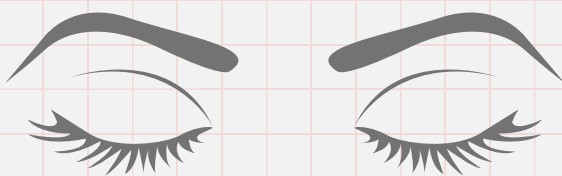
*This is also true for items that can be listed in chronological order.

Parallel Structure:

Drug side effects may include teary eyes, blurry vision, or blindness.



In order of
importance now
-- blindness is most
important so it's last



SAMPLE #4



Non-Parallel Structure:

- Tutored students with diverse backgrounds
- Schedules appointments and maintains files
- To help students become better writers

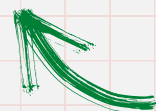
All verbs are in different tenses

Explanation:

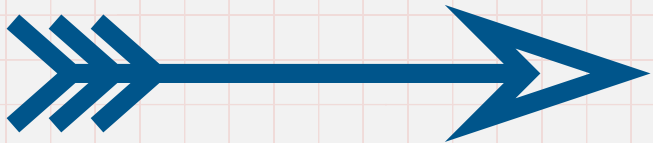
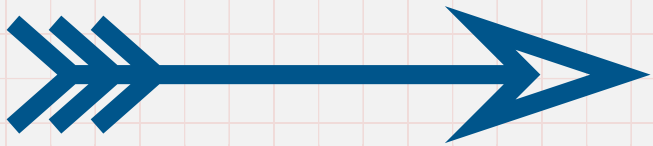
When using **bullet points**, such as on a job resume, it's important to make sure the points are parallel and use the same pattern. In this case, **all the verbs must be in the same form/tense.**

Parallel Structure:

- Tutored students with diverse backgrounds
- Scheduled appointments and maintained files
- Helped students become better writers



All verbs are in the the same tense



MORE RESOURCES

The best way to make sure that your parallel structures are correct is to your read work out loud very carefully. Verbally stressing each word in a sentence makes you hear your writing in a new way and helps you catch your mistakes

- CSULB.edu/UWC -- "Handouts" Section
- owl.purdue.edu/owl/general_writing/mechanics/parallel_structure.html
- Khan Academy - Parallel Structure:
<https://youtu.be/2l2FgUrln1A>

