

# Parallel Structure

## Marked as “// -T”

By using a consistent pattern to show that two or more ideas have the same level of importance, **parallel structure** achieves economy of words, expresses equality of ideas, and provides emphasis.

### Identifying Faulty Parallelism

The following examples demonstrate sentences that list items that are not parallel:

**Example**  
...a hotdog, hamburger, and a soda.

**Corrected**  
...a hotdog, hamburger, and soda.  
...a hotdog, a hamburger, and a soda.

**Example**  
...on Monday, Tuesday, and on Friday.

**Corrected**  
...on Monday, Tuesday, and Friday.  
...on Monday, on Tuesday, and on Friday.

### Keeping Sentences Parallel

Use the following tips to keep sentences in correct parallel structure:

**Keep the word forms (including article and preposition use) consistent in lists of two or more items. For instance, make all the items a noun, adverb, or verb.**

**Example:** Mary likes to hike, fish, and to go skiing.

**Corrected:** Mary likes *hiking, fishing, and skiing*.

**Example:** Write the report quickly, accurately, and in a detailed manner.

**Corrected:** Write the report *quickly, accurately, and thoroughly*.

**Revise phrases to maintain consistent grammatical structure.**

**Example:** Use a dictionary to check spelling, look up definitions, and for finding synonyms.

**Corrected:** Use a dictionary to *check* spelling, *to look up* definitions, and *to find* synonyms.

Use a dictionary for *checking* spelling, *looking up* definitions, and *finding* synonyms.

**Example:** John D. Rockefeller was a man who was immensely wealthy, and he also exercised great influence over the economic and political activities of his country.

**Corrected:** John D. Rockefeller was a man *who was* immensely wealthy and *who exercised* great influence over the economic and political activities of his country.

**For more information on Parallel Structure, see pp. 397-398 of the *Business Writer's Handbook*.**

