

Clarity and Concision Part III: Parallelism

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What is parallelism?

- ▶ **Parallelism** means that similar parts of a sentence have the same structure: nouns are with nouns, verbs with verbs, and phrases with phrases.

I like **singing**, **reading**, and **to dance**.

← NOT Parallel

I like **singing**, **reading**, and **dancing**.

← Parallel

Check for Parallelism in these Cases

- ▶ When joining two or more items with **and** or **or**
 - ▶ Short-term solutions include **enhancing** appropriate donations of medical equipment, **building** capacity by training technical staff, and **providing** maintenance support from sources outside the country.
- ▶ When making comparisons
 - ▶ These results suggest **playing calming music** is more effective than **providing explanatory literature** when attempting to lower a patient's heart rate before a medical procedure.

Check for Parallelism in these Cases

- ▶ **With correlative conjunctions** (like *both/and*, *either/or*, *neither/nor*, and *not only X, but also y*)
 - ▶ Women were expected to be impeccable moral guides not only **in the home**, but also **in public affairs**, a notable progression from the more silent roles of colonial women.
 - ▶ Professional music therapists not only **purposefully create** safe spaces for their clients, but also **carefully respond** to clients' reactions and progression.

Finding and Fixing Parallelism Errors

- ▶ Look for series of three or more items
 - ▶ If you want to emphasize an item or one item is necessarily wordier than the others, place that item at the end of the series.
- ▶ Check lists and headings for parallelism

- ▶ Ingredients:

- ▶ 4 oz. orange juice
- ▶ vodka (2 oz.)

Not parallel

Parallel!

- ▶ Ingredients:

- ▶ 4 oz. orange juice
- ▶ 2 oz. vodka

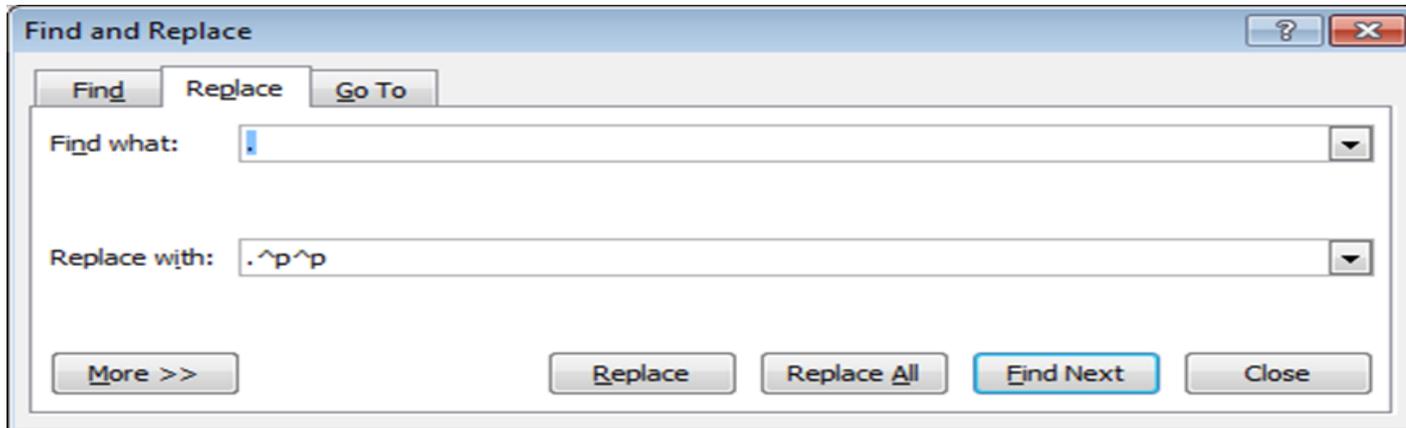
- ▶ Check for sentences that compare or otherwise pair two ideas (you may want to search for: *and*, *but*, *or*, *nor*, *for*, *so*, or *yet*; *neither...nor*, *not only...but also*, and *whether...or*).

Editing Tips

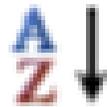


- Always take a break from your work. Give your brain a rest!
- Read your paper out loud. Seriously. Do it. This helps you slow down and to hear what your writing sounds like. If you become confused or run out of breath while reading your own work, it's a good sign you need to rewrite or shorten a sentence!
- Read your paper backwards (start with the last sentence). This helps your brain slow down and look at each sentence on its own.
- Read your work on a different medium (i.e. paper vs. screen) or change font.
- Seek out low-stakes peer review opportunities.

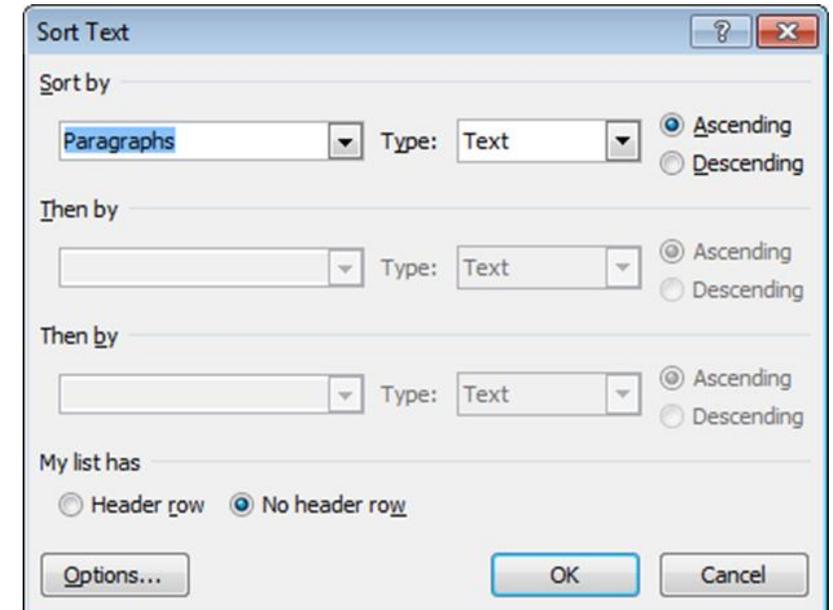
Another way to make your writing easier to proofread



2. Use “sort” feature to arrange sentences in alphabetical order.



1. Use “replace” feature to make periods signal a new paragraph.



Time to practice
with your own
writing!



And test your understanding with
our exercises in part four of this
series!



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Educational Resources for Writing from beyond UGA

- ▶ [UNC Chapel Hill's Writing Center: Tips and Tools](#)
- ▶ [Purdue Writing Lab](#)
- ▶ [Naval Post Graduate Writing Center](#)
- ▶ [Writing Commons](#)

Works Cited and Consulted

- ▶ Caplan, Nigel A. *Grammar Choices for Graduate and Professional Writers*. Second ed. University of Michigan, 2019.
- ▶ Grammar Mastery Series found at <https://my.nps.edu/web/gwc/resident-workshops>
- ▶ Lunsford, Andrea A. *The St. Martin's Handbook*. Seventh ed. Bedford, 2011.
- ▶ Zinsser, William. *On Writing Well: The Classic Guide to Writing Nonfiction*. Harper Perennial, 2006.