

Elliott Wave — Complex Corrections: Triple Three (WXYXZ)

The most complex corrective pattern. Three simple corrections joined by two connector waves. This is how markets go sideways for years — accumulation and distribution zones are often WXYXZ patterns.

Recap: The Six Corrective Patterns

#	Pattern	Type	Structure
1	Zigzag	Simple	5-3-5
2	Flat (regular, expanded, running)	Simple	3-3-5
3	Triangle	Simple	3-3-3-3-3
4	Double three (WXY)	Complex	Simple + X + Simple
5	Triple three (WXYXZ)	Complex	Simple + X + Simple + X + Simple

These are the ONLY corrective patterns that exist in Elliott Wave. Every correction you'll ever see is one of these five categories (with flats having three sub-types).

What Is a Triple Three (WXYXZ)?

A WXYXZ combines **three simple corrective patterns** connected by **two X waves**:

- **W** = first simple correction
- **X** = first connecting wave
- **Y** = second simple correction

- **X** = second connecting wave
- **Z** = third simple correction

It's the same concept as a WXY but with one more corrective pattern bolted on. This is how you get massive, drawn-out sideways markets — corrections that span years or even a decade.

Rules for What Can Appear Where

Position	Can Be	Can't Be
W	Zigzag, flat	Triangle (can't start with a triangle)
X (first)	Zigzag, flat	Triangle (not at this position)
Y	Zigzag, flat	Triangle (middle position)
X (second)	Zigzag, flat, triangle	— (triangle allowed here as it precedes the final wave)
Z	Zigzag, flat, triangle	— (triangle allowed as the final pattern, including triangle-within-triangle for 9 waves)

General rule: The W and Y are often the same type (both zigzags or both flats). The X waves are typically smaller than the W, Y, and Z waves — alternation between long/expanded patterns and short/sharp connectors.

How to Identify a WXYXZ

The time test: If a correction is lasting far longer than previous simple corrections on the same chart, it's probably a combination. If previous zigzags and flats lasted 3-6 months and this correction has been going for 2+ years, you're almost certainly in a WXYXZ.

Compare to previous wave cycles on the same timeframe. If this correction is 5-10x longer than the simple ones, it's a combination.

The channel test: Long downward (or upward) channels that keep going wave after wave are often WXYXZ patterns. What looks like a five-wave impulse in a channel might actually be a combination of corrective waves joined together.

Key Characteristics

Prolonged consolidation: WXYXZ is all about TIME. Big money achieves capitulation through either sharp price moves (zigzags) or through exhausting time (WXYXZ). These are your massive accumulation zones and distribution zones.

Market indecision: The pattern reflects a market that can't decide its direction. Sideways, choppy, frustrating for everyone involved.

Alternation within the pattern: The individual waves typically alternate between long/drawn-out patterns and short/sharp ones. A sharp zigzag followed by a drawn-out flat followed by a quick connector followed by a triangle — mixing it up within the overall structure.

Liquidity grabs: Expanded flats and irregular flats within a WXYXZ create the "springs" and liquidity hunts you see in sideways markets. Price takes out the highs (stopping out shorts), then takes out the lows (stopping out longs), then takes out the highs again — all within one big corrective structure. Now you know why.

Real Examples

FMG (Fortescue) 2008-2018 — the textbook example: Went sideways for a full decade. The wave count: sharp zigzag down (W) → alternation to a drawn-out connector (X) → flat correction with leading diagonal (Y) → connector (X) → final move down (Z). Then the major bottom → wave 1, wave 2, wave 3 of the new bull market. A chart that looks like chaos becomes readable once you know WXYXZ exists.

Common combinations seen in real markets:

- Zigzag → connector → irregular flat → connector → triangle
 - Expanded flat → connector → zigzag → connector → zigzag
 - Zigzag → connector → zigzag → connector → flat
 - Zigzag → connector → irregular flat → connector → normal flat (with liquidity grabs from the irregular flat stopping out longs before the breakout)
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The Honest Truth About Complex Corrections

From the educator: "Don't sweat if you're confused. You're not supposed to do a 10-week course and walk out being able to count every complex correction. I still can't do these perfectly myself — and I've been doing it for three to four years. Sometimes I get them, but if you pulled up a big mess of a chart I wouldn't be able to count it there and then."

Shane (CEWA-M) spends 3-4 hours on a single chart to get the right count on complex corrections. If a Master Certified Elliott Wave Analyst needs hours, you shouldn't expect to do it in minutes.

What matters more than counting perfectly:

- 1. **Recognise that complex corrections exist** — when you see a chart going sideways for years and wonder "what the hell is that," now you know. It's a WXYXZ
- 2. **Know that corrections can be prolonged** — don't assume every correction is a simple zigzag. It might extend into a WXY, then further into a WXYXZ
- 3. **Use it for context** — if you identify a massive accumulation zone as a WXYXZ, that gives you MORE reason to buy the breakout, because you know you're breaking out of a major corrective structure
- 4. **Focus on the END of the correction** — rather than counting every sub-wave, look for change of market structure, divergence, and volume to tell you the correction is DONE. Then trade the breakout
- 5. **Be careful with downward channels** — a five-wave move down in a channel might not be an impulse. It could be a WXYXZ combining multiple corrective waves. The fact that it's all moving in threes (not fives) tells you it's corrective

"I just see that and know it's corrective. I don't have to care about going in and doing every little count. I just know it's in a complex correction and then I'm looking for that change of market structure to get out of it."

This Completes the Corrective Phase

You now know every type of correction in Elliott Wave:

Simple	Complex
Zigzag (sharp, deep, 5-3-5)	Double three / WXY
Flat — regular, expanded, running (sideways, shallow, 3-3-5)	Triple three / WXYXZ
Triangle (sideways, ABCDE, wave 4 or B only)	

Every correction in every market on every timeframe is one of these patterns or a combination of them. Impulses are the easy 20%. Corrections are the hard 80%.

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