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THE PAST TENSE : Forms and Meanings

Lida Paul

Simple Past tense

- ▶ It is the most commonly used tense to refer to past time.
- ▶ It signifies two major points with respect to the time of the action.
 - i) The event is in the past.
 - ii) The event is finished.

Eg. She returned from the conference yesterday.



continued

- ▶ The use of simple past tense is also common in fictional narration to describe events and states as imagined in the past.
- ▶ Eg. *One evening after dark a young man prowled among these crumbling red mansions, ringing their bells. At the twelfth he rested his lean hand baggage upon the step and wiped the dust from his hatband and forehead. The bell sounded faint and far away in some remote, hollow depths.*
 - O. Henry , The Furnished Room



Structure of simple past tense

- i) She arranged her clothes in the wardrobe. (Affirmative sentence)
- ii) She did not finish her work on time. (Negative sentence)
- iii) Did you go to/ not go to college today? (Interrogative sentence)
- iv) For interrogative sentences with the wh-words,
What did he eat?



Perfect Aspect in the past

► It signifies

- i) A past state of action in relation to the previous past
- ii) Past before past or the embedded past

Eg. She had returned from the conference before the semester began.



Structure of the past perfect tense

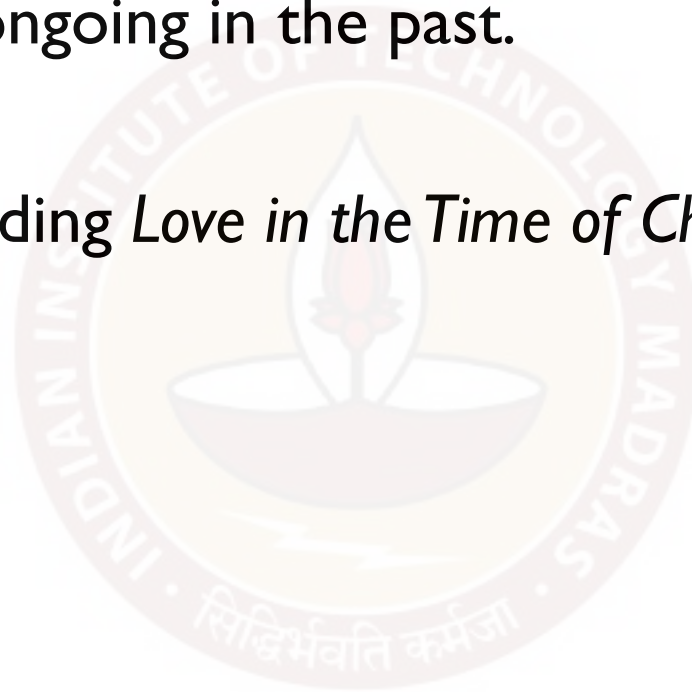
- i) She had returned from the conference. (Affirmative sentence)
- ii) The college had not given the permission to participate in the event. (Negative sentence)
- iii) They had reached home before the parcel arrived. (Plural subject)



Progressive Aspect in the past

- ▶ The progressive aspect in the past is used to convey that an action was ongoing in the past.

Eg. Kapil was reading *Love in the Time of Cholera* by Gabriel Marquez.



Structure of Past progressive tense

- i) She was walking back to her lab. (Affirmative sentence)
- ii) They were talking about the cultural fest to be held next month. (Plural subject)
- iii) She was/ They were not living in France back then.



Past perfect progressive

- ▶ It is formed by adding the progressive form to the past perfect.
- ▶ It conveys the meaning that a past embedded action was in progress.

Eg. She had been writing a book on climate change before she published her recent work.

- ▶ Certain verbs like enjoy, appreciate, love, understand, and a few others that are indicative of mental processes more commonly use the simple aspect than the progressive.



Structure of the past perfect progressive tense

- i) She had been knitting the quilt for the baby before the family arrived for Christmas. ?(Affirmative sentence)
- ii) Maya had not been working from the office. (negative sentence)
- iii) The students had not been responding positively to the classes. (Plural subject)





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THE PRESENT TENSE : Forms and Meanings

Lida Paul

Simple Present tense

- ▶ Simple present tense often refers to the present time.
- ▶ Following are the major meanings for simple present tense when it refers to present time.
 - i) A state that exists at the present time
Eg. I want a pencil and a pen.
 - ii) A habitual action
Eg. He reads newspaper in the morning.
 - iii) An action that is happening at the present time
Eg. Here comes my friend, Shikha.



Structure of simple present tense

i) She drinks tea in the evening. (Affirmative sentence)

ii) I do not want samosas. (Negative sentence)
She does not make flower bouquets.

iii) Do you sing songs? (Interrogative sentence)
Does she not wear hats?

iv) For interrogative sentences with the wh-words,
What does he like?
Where do you live?



Perfect Aspect in the present

- ▶ It refers to a present state of action in relation to the past.
- ▶ It can provide the following meanings.
 - i) the current event is also a previous event
Eg. It has drizzled all day.
 - ii) Change to the present event is the result of a recent finished event
Eg. The train has finally arrived.
I have learned driving.
 - iii) Present state is a continuation of a past time
Eg. I have owned the scooter for some time.
- ▶ Time adverbials like just, since, for, already, and yet are common with the present perfect tense.



Structure of the present perfect tense

i) The train has finally arrived. (Affirmative sentence)

ii) I have not gone on a holiday for a long time. (Negative sentence)

She has not come home since December 2021.

iii) Has she bought the book yet? (Interrogative sentence)

Have you eaten already?



Progressive Aspect in the present

- ▶ The progressive aspect in the present describes activities in progress at a given time, usually for a limited amount of time.

Eg. I'm looking for an intern.

- ▶ It is more commonly used in conversations than in writing.



Structure of Present progressive tense

- i) She is eating a mango. (Affirmative sentence)
- ii) They are writing an exam. (Plural subject)
- iii) The car is not moving due to the traffic. (Negative sentence)



Present perfect progressive

- ▶ It is formed by adding the progressive form to the present perfect.
- ▶ It indicates that an action that has begun in the past but continues to the present. However, it helps to add details to this time reference in the following ways.

Eg. The baby has been crying for long. (uninterrupted action)

It has been raining all day and now it is all clear. (recently stopped action)

Recently , I have been practising yoga. (a recently picked up habit)



Structure of the present perfect progressive tense

- i) Amit has been driving the car from Bengaluru to Chennai.
(Affirmative sentence)
- ii) Shirin has not been drinking water and now she is dehydrated. (negative sentence)
- iii) The birds have not been responding to calls lately due to interference from artificial bird calls from the smartphones. (Plural subject)





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The Future Tense : Forms and meanings

Lida Paul

***Will* and the future tense**

- ▶ English employs various ways to express future time.
- ▶ The modal auxiliary verb *will* is the most often used marker of the future time reference.
- ▶ It is used in the simple future tense form.
- ▶ *Will* suggests a sense of prediction when used as a tense-forming auxiliary.

Eg. i) The train will arrive in 5 minutes.

ii) I will cook pasta in the evening.

iii) It will be cold in Delhi at this time of year.

iv) What will he do if they don't come for the meeting?



Time adverbials and the future time

- ▶ The future time expressions in English sometimes come along with certain time adverbials to make the time reference explicit.
- ▶ Some of them are tomorrow, next (week, a day, a date, month, year,..) and prepositional phrases like in the morning, in the evening, etc.

Eg. i) I will be 28 in March.

ii) I'm on the bus and I'll reach Indore by four.

iii) They will board the plane in the morning.



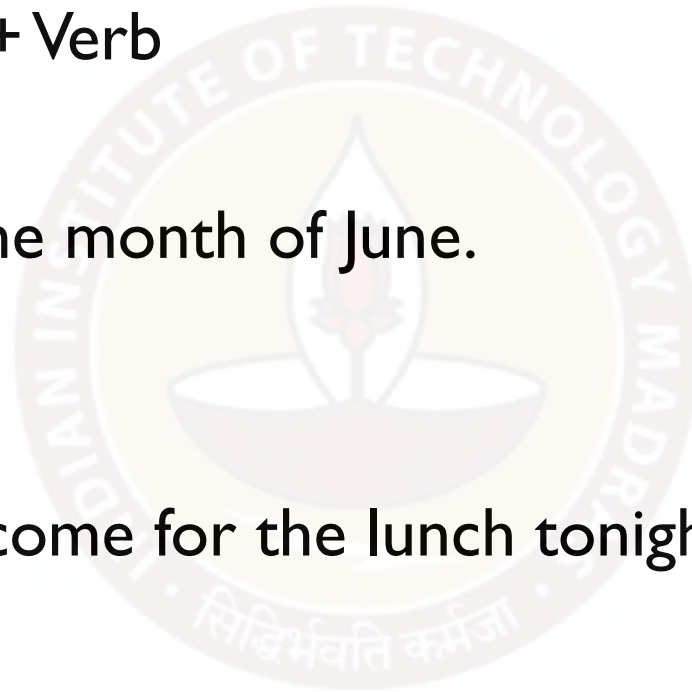
Structure of Simple Future tense

i) I will visit the mall at the weekend.

will (aux) + Verb

ii) It will rain in the month of June.

iii) They will not come for the lunch tonight.



Perfect aspect in Future tense

- ▶ The perfect aspect is used to relate one time to the other.
- ▶ It represents relational time.
- ▶ In the future perfect time, representation is of the past time within the future or the past embedded in the future time.

Eg. She *will have done* the work so the project *will be completed*.



Structure of future perfect tense

- i) She will have completed her work by then.
- ii) She will not have completed her work.
- iii) We will have spent most of the money by then.



Progressive aspect in future tense

- ▶ Future progressive tense form indicates a future action will be in progress.
- i) They will be having lunch around 12:00p.m. so don't call them now. (time-tabled future)
- ii) I'll be travelling by bus until the bike is fixed. (future routine).
- iii) I'll be taking my day off on Saturdays. (future habit)



Structure of the progressive future

- i) She will be taking the train to work from now on.
- ii) She will not be taking the train to work.
- iii) Will she be taking the train to work?



Future perfect progressive tense

- ▶ The future perfect progressive is formed by the combination of future perfect with the progressive aspect.
 - ▶ In terms of time, it refers to the previous future within the future.
 - ▶ It can give the following meanings.
 - i) A previous future state will remain a current future state
Eg. I will have been living in Chennai for over ten years.
 - ii) Future ongoing action will still be occurring
Eg. I will have been performing in the theatre group for over a year.
-



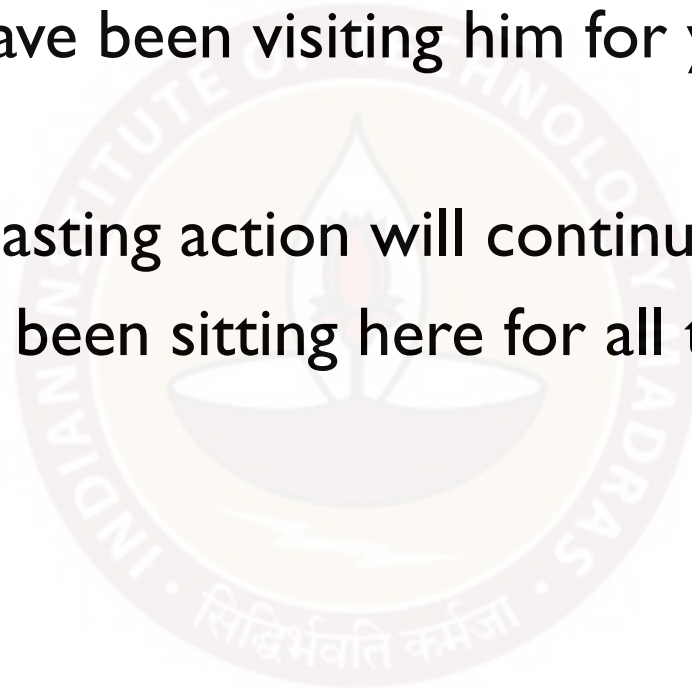
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iii) A future series of events will go on

Eg. She will have been visiting him for years by then.

iv) A future long-lasting action will continue

Eg. I will have been sitting here for all time of the day.



Structure of future perfect progressive

- i) She will have been performing in the group for years by then.
- ii) She will not have been working there for so long.
- iii) Will they have been doing that work?





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Agreement in English Sentences (Subject and Verb in Sentences)

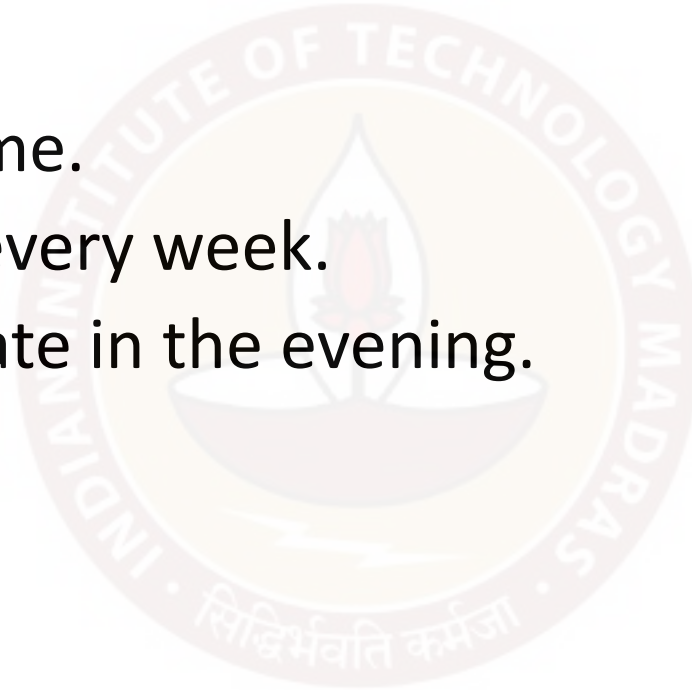
Rajesh Kumar

Sentence and Complex Sentence

- Sentence = [Subject + Predicate]
- Predicate = [Verb + Object(s) [adjuncts/adverbs]]
- Complex Sentence:
 - Subject + Predicate [embedded sentence as an object]

Agreement - 1

- Raju likes pizza.
 - I go to the office on time.
 - You go to the market every week.
 - She leaves her office late in the evening.
-
- We are happy.
 - The school is closed.
-
- *Am* is a special case tense marker.

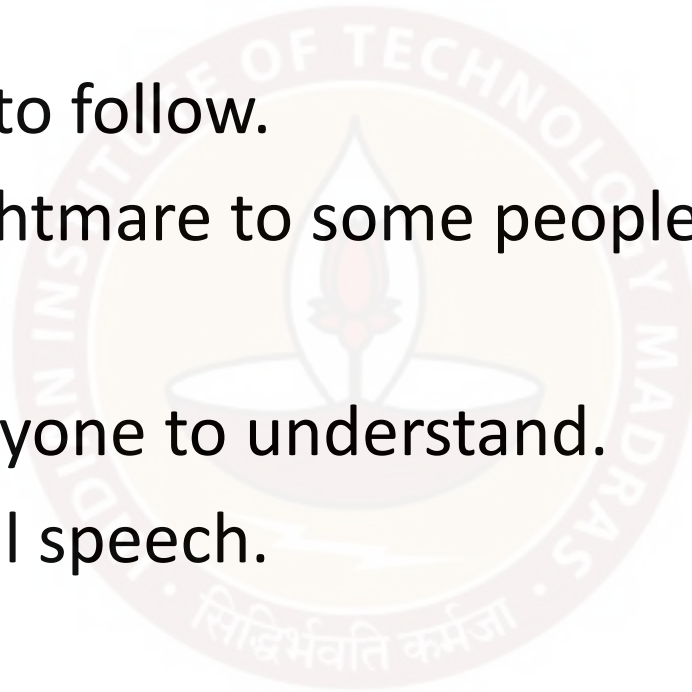


No change in forms of nouns in both singular and plural

- Sheep Deer
- The sheep **is** harmless creature.
- The sheep **are** expensive for some farmers.
- Deer is not available everywhere.
- Deer are free on IIT Madras campus.

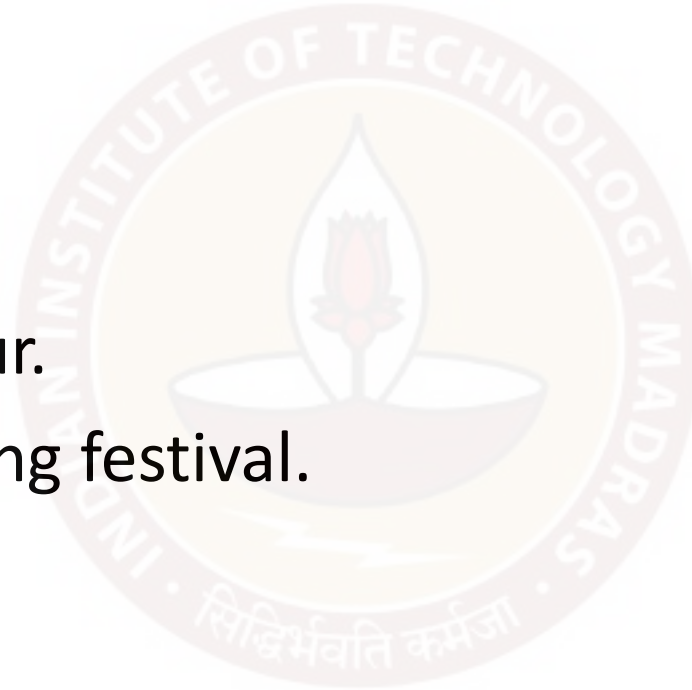
No plural forms

- Mathematics is tough to follow.
- Mathematics gives nightmare to some people.
- Politics is easy for everyone to understand.
- Politics requires careful speech.



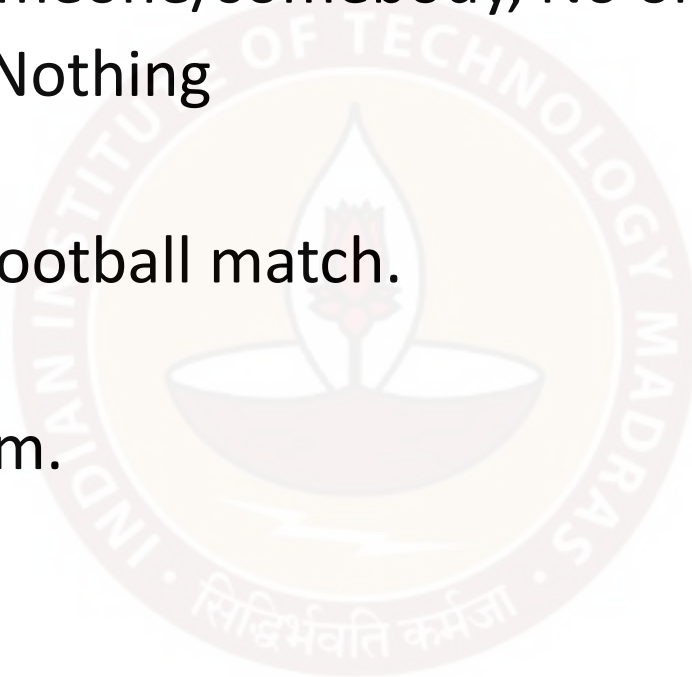
No singular forms ...

- Glasses, Jeans, Police
- My glasses are blue.
- Their jeans leave colour.
- Police are vigilant during festival.



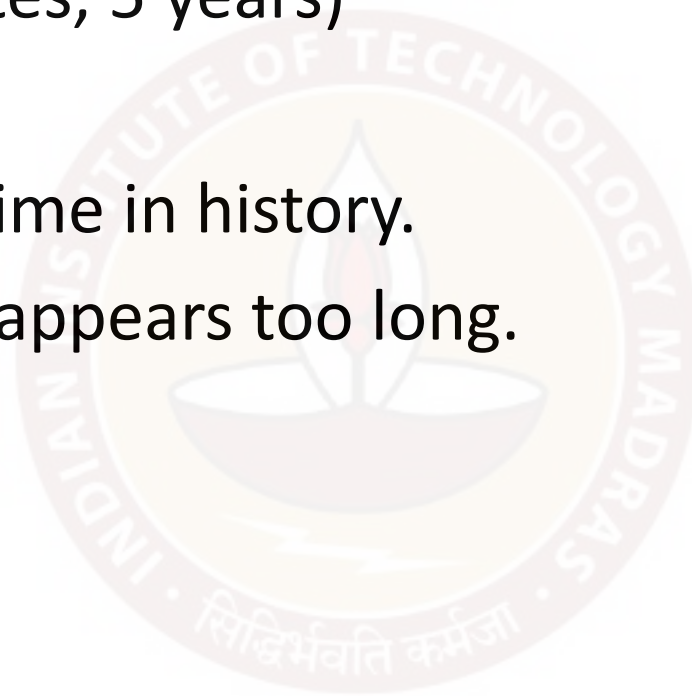
Indefinites as singular

- Everyone/Everybody, Someone/somebody, No one/Nobody,
- Everything, Something, Nothing
- Everyone comes to the football match.
- Someone is speaking.
- Nobody comes after 5 pm.
- Everything is apparent.
- Something is missing.
- Nothing gets attention.



Quantity

- Time (4 hours, 5 minutes, 5 years)
- Five years is not long time in history.
- Sometimes 5 minutes appears too long.
- Four hours is fine.



Agreement with plural complements

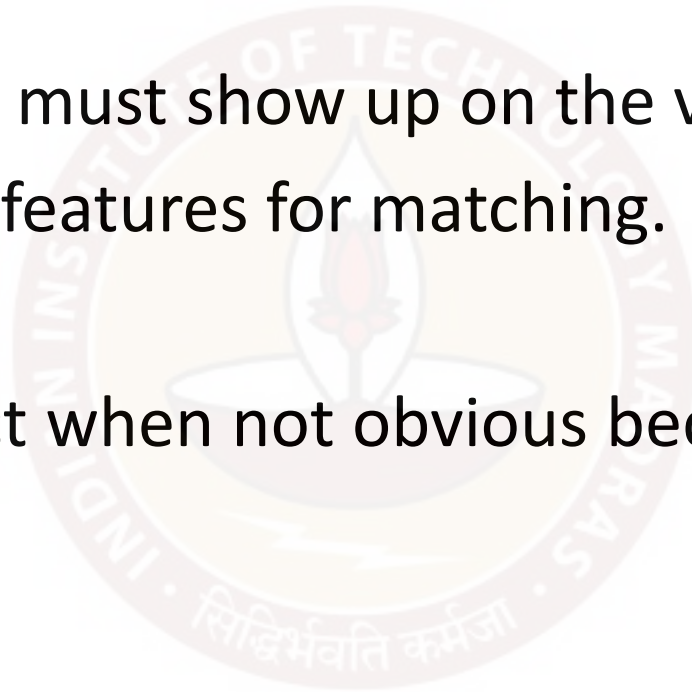
- What distracts me are the children in the park.
- Most annoying thing last week were buses on the road.
- The most beautiful thing that I saw last week was the painting in the museum.
- There are several monkeys on the tree.

Closest noun

- Either ... or...
- Neither ... nor ...
- Either my father or my siblings are with me at home.
- Either my siblings or my father is with me at home.
- Neither my father nor my siblings are with me at home.
- Neither my siblings nor my father is with me at home.
- **English tends to put plurals at the last.**

Things to notice ...

- Feature on the subject must show up on the verb.
- Verbs host agreement features for matching.
- Features on the subject when not obvious becomes a cognitive exercise.





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PRACTISE SUBJECT VERB AGREEMENT IN ENGLISH

- KARTHIKA SATHYANATHAN

1. Annie **and** her brothers **are** at school. (is/**are**)

Reason: When the subject of a sentence is composed of two or more nouns or pronouns connected by **and**, use a plural verb.

2. The dog **or** the cat **is** outside. (**is**/are)

Reason: When two or more singular nouns or pronouns are connected by **or** or **nor**, use a singular verb.

3. The dog or the cats **are** outside. (is/**are**)

4. Either my shoes or your coat **is** always on the floor. (**is**/are)

Reason: When a compound subject contains both a singular and a plural noun or pronoun joined by **or** or **nor**, the verb should agree with the part of the subject that is nearer the verb.

5. George and Tara **don't** want to see that movie.
6. Vaiga **doesn't** know the answer.
7. He **doesn't** know.
8. They **don't** know.
9. I **don't** know. (Exception)
10. You **don't** tell me that! (Exception)

Reason: **Doesn't** is a contraction of **does not** and should be used only with a singular subject. **Don't** is a contraction of **do not** and should be used only with a plural subject. The exception to this rule appears in the case of the first person and second person pronouns **I** and **you**. With these pronouns, the contraction **don't** should be used.

11. **One** of the boxes **is** open
12. **The people** who listen to that music **are** few.
13. **The team captain**, as well as his players, **is** anxious.
14. **The book**, including all the chapters in the first section, **is** boring.
15. **The woman** with all the dogs **walks** down my street.

Reason: Do not be misled by a phrase that comes between the subject and the verb. The verb agrees with the subject, not with a noun or pronoun in the phrase.

16. Each of these donuts **is** yummy.

17. Everybody knows Mr. Ram.

18. Either is correct.

Reason: The words each, each one, either, neither, everyone, everybody, anybody, anyone, nobody, somebody, someone, and no one are singular and require a singular verb.

19. The **news is** on at six.

Reason: Nouns such as civics, mathematics, dollars, measles, and news require singular verbs.

The word dollars is a special case. When talking about an amount of money, it requires a singular verb, but when referring to the dollars themselves, a plural verb is required.

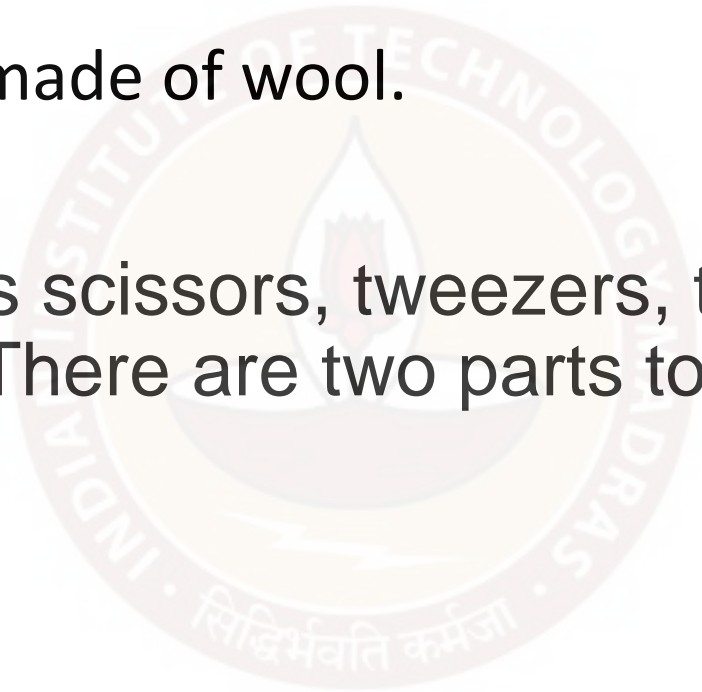
Five dollars is a lot of money.

Dollars are often used instead of rubles in Russia.

20. These scissors are dull.

21. Those trousers are made of wool.

Reason: Nouns such as scissors, tweezers, trousers, and shears require plural verbs. (There are two parts to these things.)



22.The team runs during practice.

23.The committee decides how to proceed.

24. The family has a long history.

25. That class is very noisy.

Reason: Collective nouns are words that imply more than one person but that are considered singular and take a singular verb, such as group, team, committee, class, and family.