

# SUBJECT VERB AGREEMENT

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# BASIC RULE:

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- Singular subjects must have singular verbs.  
Plural subjects take plural verbs.

# RULES ON SUBJECT- VERB AGREEMENT

# 1. The pronoun “YOU” always takes a plural verb.

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Examples:

- You were invited to come.
- You are asked to clean the room.
- You sing so well.



## *2. If a sentence begins with **HERE** or **THERE**, the verb agrees with the subject which follows it.*

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Examples:

- Here are the ways on how to preserve meat.
- There is a huge gap between the rich and the poor.



3. If two subjects, one single and one plural, are connected by EITHER/OR or NEITHER/NOR, the verb agrees with the nearer subject.

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Examples:

- Neither the players nor the coach is joining.
- Either the conductor or the singers are attending the concert.

4. A singular subject followed by intervening words or phrases such as WITH, AS WELL AS, IN ADDITION TO, ACCOMPANIED BY, TOGETHER WITH and ***NO LESS THAN***, takes a singular verb

## Examples:

- Jake, accompanied by his sisters, is enrolling in PCC.
- Daddy, as well as my brothers, is enjoying the party.



5. Singular subjects joined by AND require a plural verb, except when they mean one thing.

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Examples:

- Sita and Madhukar are reading novels.
- My teacher and friend is here.





6. Two singular subjects joined by EITHER/OR or NEITHER/NOR take a singular verb.

Examples:



- Either Mummy or Daddy is coming with me at the party.
- Neither Rakesh nor Prajakta is waiting for you.

7. If a singular subject is followed by <sup>10</sup>a phrase containing a plural noun, the verb is singular.

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Examples:

- One of the boys is yelling so loud
- One of the members is against the rule.



8. The indefinite pronouns SEVERAL, FEW, <sup>11</sup>  
BOTH, MANY , OTHERS are *always plural*.

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Examples:

- Both were asking to be freed.
- Several are seeking justice.

9. The indefinite pronouns **SOME**, **MOST**, **ALL**, **NONE** are singular or plural according to the meaning of the sentence.

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Examples:

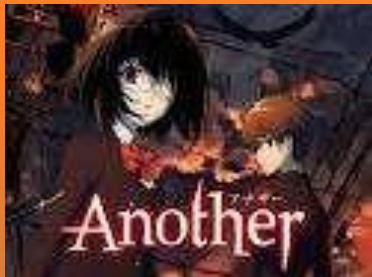
- Some of the girls were absent.
- Some of the ice cream is left.



**NONE**

NO ONE, ANOTHER, ANYBODY, NOBODY, EVERY, NOTHING,  
 EVERYTHING, ANYONE, EITHER, NEITHER, EVERYONE, SOMEBODY,  
 SOMEONE.

Example:



- Every man and woman in this hall is a member.



# 11. Expressions of time, money, weight, and distance are singular even if the form is plural.

## ► Examples:

- Two years is a long time to wait.
- One million dollars was given back to the owner.



12. When the amount of money refers to separate units, the verb is plural.

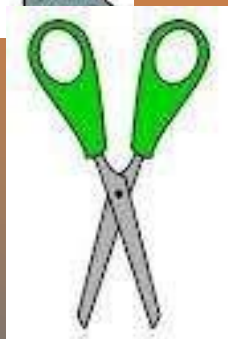
Examples:

- Five 25-paise coins were found.
- Sixty 100-paises bills were added to the budget.



13. The following words are always plural: 16  
PANTS, TROUSERS, PLIERS, SCISSORS, SHEARS,  
TONGS. However, if ***the word PAIR is used,***  
***the verb is singular.***

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Examples:

- The pants are torn into two.
- The pair of scissors was placed on the table.



# 14. Certain nouns, though plural in form, are singular in meaning and therefore take singular verbs.

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## Examples:

- Mathematics is my favorite subject.
- The latest news is alarming to the public.



15. When the word is preceded by A, it takes a plural verb. When it is preceded by THE, it takes a singular verb.

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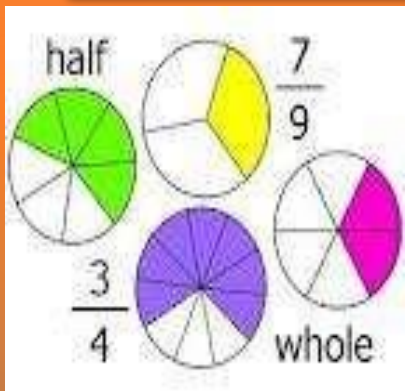
Examples:

- A number of students are waiting outside.
- The number of students outside is not recorded yet.



# 16. When fractions are used, the verb agrees with the object of the OF PHRASE.

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## Examples:

- One half of the cake was consumed.
- One fourth of the employees were attending the seminar.

**17. These nouns may be singular or plural in meaning: ATHLETICS, GENETICS, POLITICS, GYMNASTICS, STATISTICS. When the noun refers to an organized activity, it is singular; when the noun refers to the activities of individuals within a group, or to varied activities, it is plural.**

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Examples:



- Gymnastics is very popular among girls.
- The gymnastics shown in the field today were outstanding.

# 18. The name of a country is always regarded as singular.

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## Examples:

- The Bahamas has beautiful beaches.
- Philippines is a wondrous place.



# 19. Adjectives used as nouns are considered plural.

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## ► Examples:

- The poor are to be helped.
- The efficient are what this country needs.



20. *Collective nouns may be singular or plural depending on whether the individual members are acting individually or collectively. These nouns are: COMPANY, GROUP, COMMITTEE, CROWD, JURY, FLOCK, TEAM.*

Examples:



- The committee is against the plan. (acting collectively-singular)
- The committee are of different opinion. (acting individually-plural)

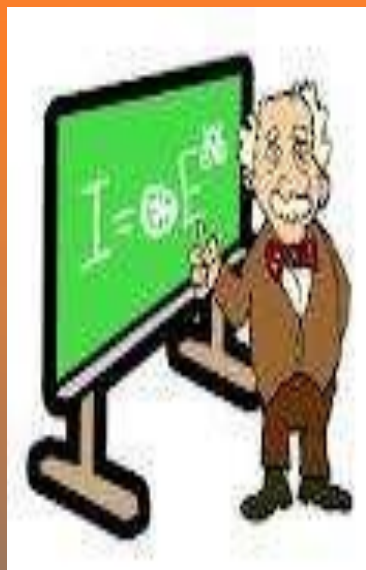
21. In the use of mathematical expressions, the following are accepted:

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Examples:

- Seven plus three is ten.
- Seven and three are ten.
- Five times two are ten.
- Five minus two is three.





22. Titles of books, plays, articles, movies, etc. are regarded as singular even though words in the title may be plural.

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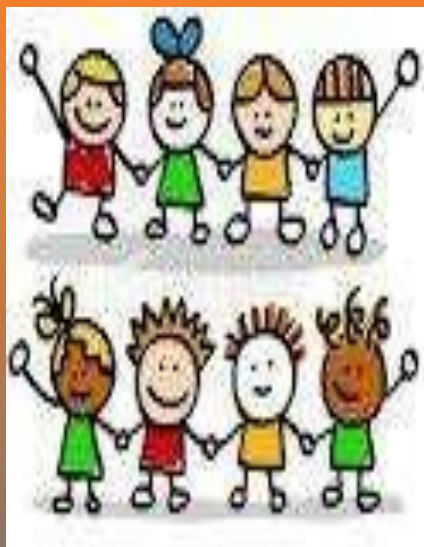
Examples:



- “In Dreams Begin Responsibilities” is a story by D. Schwartz.
- “Great Expectations” is a must-read novel.

23. Names of organizations take a singular verb when the whole organization is referred to, and a plural verb when the members are referred to.

## Examples:



- Tata and Sons is a successful organization.
- Tata and Sons are holding a two-day annual meeting.

24. If a sentence begins with the expletive IT, the verb is always singular even if the subject that follows the verb is plural

Examples:

- It is the schools which must assume the responsibility.
- It is us who must take care of the environment.



## REFERENCES:

- Communication Arts 1