



Subject-Verb Agreement

SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT

The *subject* is the one that is being talked about in a sentence.

A *verb* is a word that shows an action or tells something about the subject of the sentence.

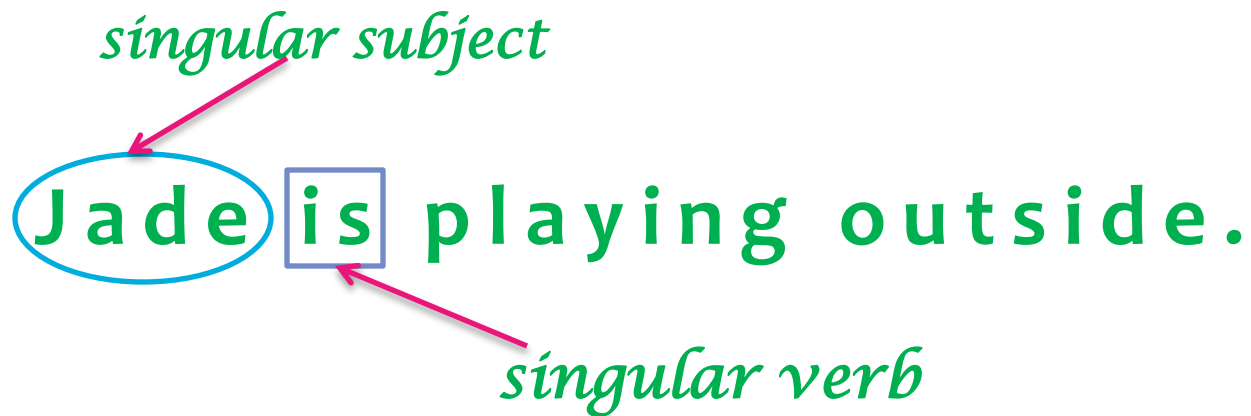
The *subject* and the *verb* of the sentence must agree in *number*.



SINGULAR SUBJECTS

A singular subject requires a singular verb.

Example:

singular subject
Jade is playing outside.
singular verb

Allan teaches geometry.
singular subject



PLURAL SUBJECTS

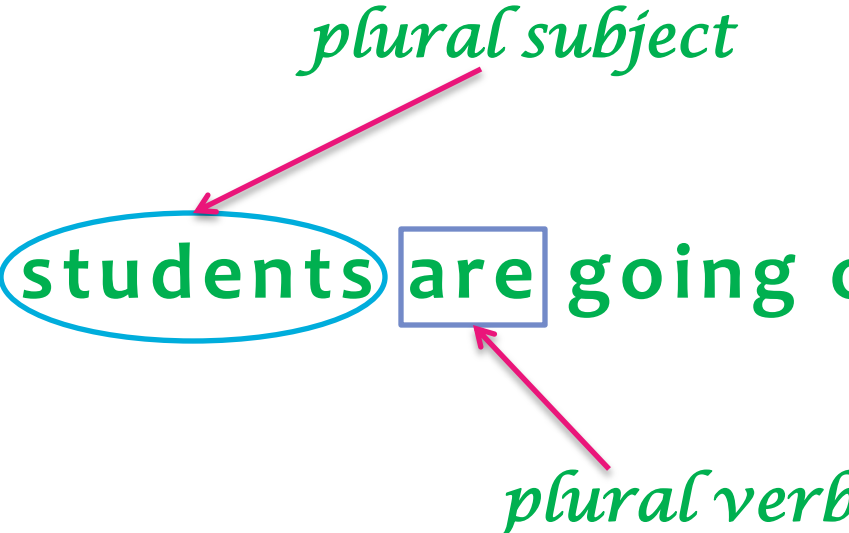
A plural subject requires a plural verb.

Example:

plural subject

The **students** **are** going on a field trip.

plural verb



A phrase or a clause that comes between a subject and its verb does not affect subject-verb agreement.

Examples:

The leader ~~of the kidnappers~~ was killed in the encounter.

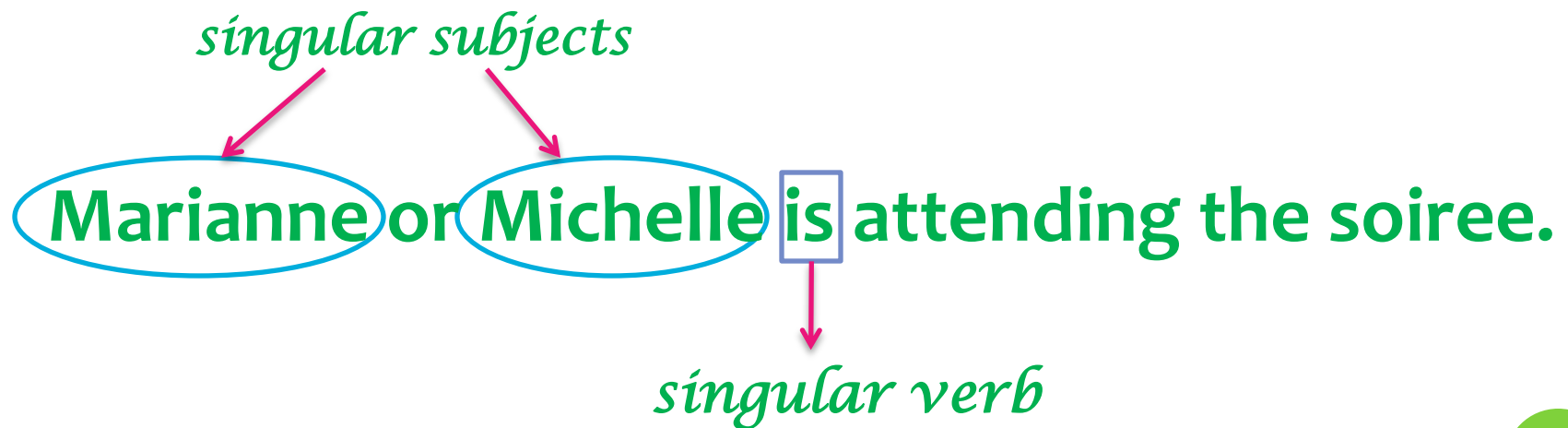
The guards ~~whom the organizer hired to maintain peace and order~~ were responsible for the encounter.



SUBJECTS JOINED BY OR OR NOR

1. When *both parts* of a compound subject joined by OR or NOR are singular, a singular verb is required.

Example:



SUBJECTS JOINED BY OR OR NOR

2. When *both parts* of a compound subject joined by OR or NOR are plural, a plural verb is required.

Example:

plural subjects

The parents or their children were present.

plural verb

SUBJECTS JOINED BY OR OR NOR

3. When one or more singular are joined to one or more plural subjects by OR or NOR, the verb should agree with the *nearest subject*.

Example:

singular subjects
nearest subject
plural subject *plural verb*

Diane, Duane, or the girls are going to market.

SUBJECTS JOINED BY AND

A compound subject joined by **AND** is generally plural and require a plural verb.

Example:

subject #1
↓
Hysper and her *subject #2*
↓ **brother** **are** king people.
↑
plural verb



EXCEPTIONS!!!

If the pairs of the compound subject joined by **AND** are thought of as **one item or unit**, a **singular verb** is needed.

Example:

singular subject (one item)

Ham and cheese **is** my usual breakfast.

Singular verb



EXCEPTIONS!!!

If the word **EVERY** or **EACH** comes before a compound subject, a singular verb is required.

Examples:

Every man, woman, and child **was** tested for the virus.

Each student and guardian **is** requested to participate in the school activity.



EXCEPTIONS!!!

If the parts of the compound subject refer to the same person, place, thing or event, it is singular and needs a singular verb.

Examples:

The owner and manager of the construction is her husband.

- The owner and manager is the same person.



CONFUSING SUBJECTS

A noun denoting an amount or measurement is usually singular and needs a singular verb.

Examples:

Ten thousand pesos is all I need for my shopping spree.

Twelve feet is the depth of the swimming pool at the resort.



CONFUSING SUBJECTS

When a collective noun is thought of as a single unit, a singular verb is required.

Examples:

The team is going to win in the championship game.

The committee has decided on the issue of his expulsion.



CONFUSING SUBJECTS

When a collective noun is thought of as composed of many individuals, a plural verb is required.

Examples:

The jury have been deliberating on the verdict for hours but they haven't agreed upon it yet.

All the Cabinet have been given a memorandum.



CONFUSING SUBJECTS

In cases where the subject is preceded by its verb, the verb should still agree with the subject.

Examples:

On top of the table are three apples.

There is a pine tree beside the house.



CONFUSING SUBJECTS

The subject of an interrogative sentence must agree with the verb.

Examples:

Does the boy go to rehearsals everyday?

Do the boys go to rehearsals everyday?



CONFUSING SUBJECTS

Singular indefinite pronouns require singular verb.

Examples:

Everyone is expected to submit his project on time.

Someone is knocking at the door.



CONFUSING SUBJECTS

Plural indefinite pronouns need plural verbs.

Examples:

Several of the contract workers were sent home.

Both of the suspects are missing.



CONFUSING SUBJECTS

The pronouns all, any, more, most and some require singular verbs if the noun they are referring to is singular and plural verbs if the noun is plural.

Examples:

All the book was ruined.

All of the cubicles are occupied.



CONFUSING SUBJECTS

Nouns that are plural in form but singular in meaning require singular verbs.

Examples:

Mathematics is my favorite subject.

Semantics is the study of meanings in language.



CONFUSING SUBJECTS

Some nouns are always plural and should have plural verbs.

Examples:



The tweezers are on top of my dresser.



Grandfather's eyeglasses were lost.



CONFUSING SUBJECTS

A linking verb should agree with its subject, not with its predicate nominative or subjective complement.

Examples:

One reason for drug addiction is broken families.



Broken families are one reason for drug addiction.



CONFUSING SUBJECTS

A title of a poem, article, essay, story, or novel is singular and requires a singular verb.

Examples:

“Little Women” is a touching novel by Louisa May Alcott.

Victor Hugo’s “Les Miserables” is a dramatic and powerful social document about the French Revolution.

