

COMMON ERROR IN SUBJECT VERB AGREEMENT

1. A phrase of measurement, though plural in form, takes a singular verb

Correct: Two hours is a long time to wait.

Incorrect: Five miles are too far to walk.

2. We use a singular verb after a subject with each, every, any, everyone, someone, anything, nothing.

Correct: Every pupil has a book.

Each student has to submit the copy.

Incorrect: Each boy were wicked.

3. An uncountable noun, though plural in sense, takes a singular verb.

Correct: Her hair is grey.

Incorrect: The grass are getting long.

4. If two singular nouns refer to the same person or thing or together express one idea, the verb must be singular.

Correct: Slow but steady wins the race.

Incorrect: Bread and butter are his favorite food.

5. Two or more singular subjects connected by "and" usually take a verb in the plural.

Correct:He and his friend have arrived there.

Incorrect: Ram and Shyam is two brothers.

6. If two or more singular subjects preceded by 'each' or 'every' are connected by 'and', the verb is usually singular.

Correct: Every man and woman was present at the festival.

Incorrect:Each girl and boy were dressed.

7. Some nouns which are plural in form but singular in meaning take a singular verb.

Correct:The news is true.

Incorrect:politics are the business of his life.

9. Two or more singular subjects connected by 'or', 'nor', 'either...or', 'neither...nor' take a verb in the singular.

Correct: The boy or the girl is fond of sweets.

Incorrect: Either Amal or Bimal have eaten the mango.

10. pair noun like trousers, glasses, scissors etc is plural in form and takes a plural verb.

Correct:Your new glasses are very nice.

Incorrect: Here is the scissors.

11 A collective noun takes a singular verb when it is thought of as a whole and takes a plural verb when the individuals are separately thought of.

Correct The committee has agreed to take the decision.

Incorrect: The jury is divided in their opinion.

12. Many a or many an before a noun is singular in form and the verb is usually singular.

Correct; Many a rose is born to blush unseen.

13. when the subjects joined by 'or' 'nor' 'either...or' 'neither...nor' are of different persons, the verb agrees in person with the one nearest to it.

Correct: Either he or I have done this.

Incorrect: Neither he or they has gone to the market.