



PRESIDENCY COLLEGE
(Autonomous)



*Reaccredited by
NAAC with A+*

Subject verb agreement

Presidency
Group

OVER
40
YEARS
OF ACADEMIC
WISDOM



PRESIDENCY COLLEGE
(AUTONOMOUS)

AFFILIATED TO BENGALURU CITY UNIVERSITY, APPROVED BY AICTE, DELHI & RECOGNISED BY THE GOVT. OF KARNATAKA

RE-ACCREDITED BY NAAC WITH 'A+' GRADE



To avoid common mistakes

Form s Verb	NUMBER & TENSE To Be	person	Examples:
Am	S - PRESENT	I	I am a girl
Is	S – PRESENT	He/she/it	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He is a coward • It is sleeping.
Are	P – PRESENT	We/you/they	They are marvellous
Was	S – PAST	I/ he/she/it	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • She was happy • It was barking
Were	P – PAST	We/you/they	You were nervous We were young

Have

Form	NUMBER & TENSE	PERSON	EXAMPLE
Have	P – PRESENT	I / they / we/ you	I have a doubt. They have a problem.
Has	S – PRESENT	He she it	He has my pen. She has a pet. It has a fever.
Had	PAST	I / they / we/ you He she it	

DO

Form	NUMBER & TENSE	PERSON	
DO	S – PRESENT	I / they / we/ you	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I do the work. • We do it together. • They do the gardening.
DOES	S – PRESENT	He she it	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • She does the finances. • He does the cooking. • It does not bite.
DID	PAST	I / they / we/ you He she it	

1. Singular Subject – Singular Verb

If the subject is singular, the verb must be singular too.

Example: She writes every day.

He works hard.

The dog guards the house.

Exception:

I write everyday.

I work hard.

I guard the treasure.



2. Subject plural – verb plural

If the subject is plural, the verb must also be plural.

Example: They write every day.

We work everyday.

You guard the treasure.

Verb	Singular	Plural
Drink	She drinks/ He drinks/ It drinks	They drink/ we drink/ You drink/ I drink
Dance	Dances	Dance
Sit	Sits	Sit



3. Use of 'and'

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

Example:

The doctoral student *and* the committee members write every day.

The boy and the girl are in trouble.

The table and the chair have been broken.

Choose the correct verb form:

Baby and I (am, is, are) going to the farm.

Exception:

Bread and butter (am/is/are) the best breakfast.



Exercises:

1. A bicycle and a pedestrian (was, were) involved.
2. The goose and the chickens (eat, eats) early in the morning.
3. The new bed and breakfast (open, opens) this week.
4. The girls (dance, dances) very well
5. Karthik (kill, kills) ants with his shoes.
6. Raju and I (is, are) best friends.
7. I (was/were) afraid you will not understand.



4. Singular for these

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

Example:

- **Each** of the participants was willing to be recorded.
- **Neither of the** alternative hypothesis was accepted.
- I will offer 5 gift cards to **everybody** who participates in the study.
- Each one of you is important for the study.
- Either Sam or Ram runs the show.
- Neither Sam nor Ram runs the show.
- **No one** was available to meet with me at the preferred times.





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1. Each and everyone of us (is, are) entitled to justice.
2. Everybody (has, have) an opinion.
3. No one (know, knows) you as well as I do.
4. Nobody (like, likes) the book as much as I do.
5. Each one of the members (take, takes) turns to cook each night.
6. Each one of the books (is/are) to be filed properly.
7. Somebody from this group (is/are) guilty of shoplifting.
8. Someone (like/likes) the party, I see.



5. Either...Or / Neither...nor

2 subjects – 2nd subject – one right before the verb – s-v agreement

Example:

- Either the chairperson or the CEO approves the proposal before proceeding.
- Either the mother or the father enjoys music.
- Neither **the brothers** nor the sister is well behaved.
- Neither the brother nor the sisters are well behaved.
- Neither the brothers not the sisters are well behaved.
- Neither the dog nor the cat has any intentions of giving up.
- Either Ravi or Sita (call/calls) the shots.
- Either the tables or the chairs (need/needs)mending.
- Either the table or the chairs (need/needs)mending.
- Neither the tables nor the chair (need/needs)mending.



6. Collective nouns – singular

Collective nouns are words that imply more than one person but are considered singular and take a singular verb. Some examples are ***group, team, committee, family, population, jury*** and ***class***.

Example:

- The **group** meets every week.
- The **committee** agrees on the quality of the writing.
- A **flock of birds** is flying south.



Exercises:

1. Neither Hindi nor English (makes, make) a difference to me.
2. Either apples or oranges (is, are) my favourite!.
3. Neither car nor bike (is, are) as fast as an aeroplane.
4. The jam or the preserve (is, are) meant for breakfast.
5. Dosa nor idli (taste, tastes) good with tomato sauce.
6. The colony (decide, decides) on the fate of the rebel.
7. The crowd (cheer, cheers) as they make the goal.
8. The team (is, are) ready for the finals.
9. Neither Sita nor I (am/is/are) going to speak to you.
10. A pride of lions (is/are) walking this way.



7. *Of* – phrase, *along with*, *as well as*, *besides*, *not*,

A subject will come before a phrase beginning with *of*. This is a key rule for understanding subjects. The word *of* is the culprit in many, perhaps most, subject-verb mistakes.

A bouquet *of yellow roses* lends color and fragrance to the room.
(bouquet lends, not roses lend)

The teacher along with her students stands against injustice.

The bag as well as the watches is a gift from my father.

The politician, *along with the newsmen*, is expected shortly.

Excitement, *as well as nervousness*, is the cause of her shaking.

The lamp *and not the beads* is the evidence.





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8. Singular verb with distances, periods of time, sums of money, etc.

Examples:

*Three miles **is** too far to walk.*

*Five years **is** the maximum sentence for that offense.*

*Ten dollars **is** a high price to pay.*

*Five kilometers **is** the distance to the nearest bus stop.*

*Ten years **makes** a decade.*

*Thousand rupees **is** my consultation charges.*

*Three liters **is** what I spilled last time.*

*150 rupees **was** the cost of oil.*

*Twenty kilometers **is** what I walked to replace the oil.*





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1. Man and woman (am/is/are) complementary to each other.
2. Plenty of mangoes and bananas (am/is/are) available in this season.
3. A dictionary or an atlas (am/is/are) missing from the library.
4. The leader **as well as his brothers** (belong/belongs) to the same tribe.
5. Cats and dogs (do/does/did) not get along.
6. The brothers as well as their sister (am/is/are) good at their studies.
7. The students **accompanied by their teacher** (have/has) gone on a picnic.
8. A lot of houses (have/has) collapsed in the storm.
9. The children as well as their mother (am/is/are) missing.
10. A large sum of money (was/were) stolen.





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There are a lot of questions.
There is a doubt.

S+V+O



Either the bags or **the mugs** were stolen during the party.
Neither the bags not **the mug** was stolen during the party.

(was/were)

Each one of the answer (is/are) to be corrected.
Each (one) of us (is/are) a victim of the rules.

