

8. The bed _____ made as soon as I got up.
9. Sarah _____ ski or roller skate.
10. _____ Matthew bring coffee?

Exercise 5

- | | | | |
|----------|-------------|------------|------------|
| 1. were, | 2. has, | 3. did, | 4. didn't, |
| 5. is, | 6. doesn't, | 7. didn't, | 8. don't, |
| 9. were, | 10. hasn't | | |

Exercise 6

1. Jessica **is** taking John to the airport.
2. If he **doesn't** arrive on time, he'll have to take a later flight.
3. Unfortunately, our dinner **has been** eaten by the dog.
4. I **have** purchased a new pair of shoes to replace the ones that were lost in my luggage.
5. We hope you **don't** have an accident on your way to school.
6. She **was** baking a pie for dessert.
7. Dad **has been** working hard all day.
8. The bed **was** made as soon as I got up.
9. Sarah **doesn't** ski or roller skate.
10. **Did** Matthew bring coffee?

SESSION - 4

🌀 SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT

Subject verb agreement is where we agree the verb with the subject.

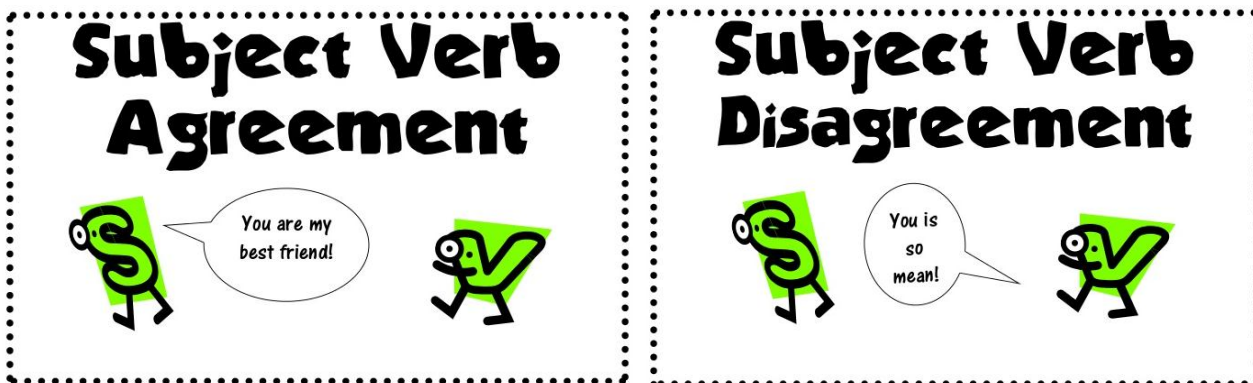
A sentence is made up of 2 parts, subject and verb.

Subject that tells what the sentence is about. It can be either a noun or a pronoun. It can be either singular or plural.

Verb represents the action of a sentence.

How to make the verb agree with the subject?

- 1) Identify the subject of the sentence.
- 2) Decide if the subject is singular or plural.
- 3) Lastly, decide which verb form will match with the subject.



RULES:

1. Verb-number agreement

Singular subjects take singular verbs and plural subjects take plural verbs.

- The **list** of to-dos **was** too long for me to handle.

The **lists** of to-dos **were** too long for me to handle.

- Even **an animal** has **its** own territory.

Even **animals** **have** **their** own territory.

EXCEPTION to this rule:

A **plural verb is always required after 'YOU'** even when it is used in singular, referring to one person. For e.g.:

- **You were** going to send over the document.

2. Rule for when verb has 's' at the end

The 's' is added after a noun indicates plural. But **an 's' after a verb indicates THIRD PERSON SINGULAR** i.e. the sentence is in third person and the subject is singular. For e.g.:

- **She goes** to the library every single day.
- **They go** to the restaurant every day for their favourite dish.

3. The verb has to agree only with the true, main subject

Not with the intervening plural object of a preposition or any other intervening plural.

- The **box** of Nestlé's chocolates **is** missing.

Here, the main subject is box, not chocolates. Hence, we use 'is' instead of 'are'.

More examples:

- His **experience** as a teacher to young kids **gives** him a lot of understanding.
- The **prices** of the new iPhone **vary** from country to country.

4. Subjects joined by 'AND' are usually plural and take plural verbs.

- His laptop **and** my ipad **were** stolen from the desk.
- Chennai **and** Kolkata **have** very hot weather.

EXCEPTIONS to this rule:

- If the subject has **two singular nouns connected by AND**; and both are about the **same person** / thing, then the **verb remains singular**.
 - My best friend **and** roommate **is** going to US for a vacation.
 - Soup **and** bread **is** our Sunday breakfast.
- When **two subjects connected by AND** are preceded by '**each, every or many**', a **singular verb** is used.
 - **Every** chair, table and sofa, every single piece of furniture in the house **is** up for auction.
 - **Every** man and woman in the store **is** requested to go through the security check.

5. Rule for 'with, together with, along with, besides, as well as, including, in addition to'

Words like 'with, together with, along with, besides, as well as, including, in addition to, etc. do not affect the number of the verb. If the main subject is singular, the verb has to be singular; if the subject is plural, the verb has to be plural.

- The television, **along with** the cabinet, **is to be** sold.
- Our chief competitor, **as well as** ourselves, **is obliged** to increase the prices.
- The decoration of the room, **including** all the paintings on the walls, **is** most pleasing.

6. Rule when both singular and plural subjects are present.

If the subject is made up of both singular and plural words connected by or, nor, either – or, neither – nor, not only, but also then the verb agrees with the nearer part of the subject.

- Neither the quality nor the **prices have** changed.
- Neither the prices nor the **quality has** changed.
- Neither the salesman nor **the buyers are** in favour of the system of management.
- Neither the buyers nor the **salesman is in favour** of the system of the management.

7. Rule for neither-nor, either-or & or

If the subject consists of two singular words connected by 'or, neither- nor, either – or', the subject is singular and requires a singular verb.

- **Neither** the laptop **nor** the phone **was** in working order.
- **Either** January **or** February **is going to be** her wedding month.

8. Rule for nouns that are plural in form but singular in meaning

Nouns that are plural in form but singular in meaning such as news, measles, mumps, physics, electronics, tactics, economics and so on usually take singular verbs.

- **News is** traveling faster than ever before.
- **Physics has** fascinated my hostel mate for months.

Some nouns ending in ‘-ics’ such as **athletics, statistic and politics** are considered singular when referring to an organized body of knowledge and plural when referring to individual facts, qualities or activities.

- **Athletics provide** good recreation. (i.e. various games)
- **Economics is** an important subject for every field of study.

9. A linking verb usually agrees with its subject, not with its compliment.

- Excessive **absences were** the reason for his failure.
- The reason of his **failure was** excessive absences.

10. Rule for nouns that do not have singular forms

Plural verbs are required for many nouns that have no singular form, such as proceeds, goods, ashes, remains, credentials, premises etc.

- The **proceeds** of the magic show **are** to be given to the fund for soldier's welfare.
- The **goods are** being dispatched today by goods train.

SUBJECT VERB AGREEMENT FOR COLLECTIVE NOUNS

What are collective nouns?

A collective noun is a word that represents a group of persons, animals or things. For e.g. audience, committee, company, council, army, police, society, board, department, cabinet etc. the following rules govern the form of verb to be used with a collective noun.

1. When a group acts as a unit, the verb should be singular.

- The **committee has** agreed to submit its report on Friday.
- The **board of directors meets** once in a month.
- The **firm is one of the most** reputed in the country.
- The **majority has** made its decision.

2. When the members of the group are thought of as acting separately, the verb should be plural.

- The **teams are arguing** over who should be the captain (individual members in the team are arguing).
- The **committee were** not in agreement on the action to be taken.
The **audience were** cheering and laughing, even crying.

3. Company names may be either singular or plural, according to their meaning.

The plural form emphasizes the individual personnel making up the company.

- **Mudra and corporation have** retained the goodwill of their customers.
- The **oil corporation is** located at Nariman Point, Mumbai.

4. Rule for nouns expressing time, money or quantity

When nouns expressing periods of time, amounts of money or quantities are considered as a singular unit, singular verbs are used. For e.g.

- **Rs.10 seems** too much for the job.
- **3 months is** too long a time to wait.
- The **number of board members is** very small.
- **That Rs.1 lakh was an** inheritance from my father.
- Yes, **5m is ample** for a suit.

5. After such expressions as 'one half of', 'two-thirds of', 'a part of', 'a majority of'

- Use a singular verb if a singular noun follows the 'of'.
 - **A part of** the office **is** closed.
 - **Two-third of** the mailing list **has been** typed.
 - **A majority of** 3500 **indicates his** popularity in the constituency.
- Use a plural verb when a plural noun follows the 'of'.
 - Part **of the walls are** to be painted.
 - **Two thirds of** our workers live in the suburbs.
 - The **majority of our staff members** live in villages.

6. Rules for 'The number'

The expression '**the number**' has a **singular meaning and requires a singular verb**, whereas the expression '**a number**' has a **plural meaning and takes a plural verb**.

- **The number** of board members **is** very small.
- **A number** of board members **were** absent.
- **The number** of orders **is** still to be executed **is** estimated at nearly a 100.
- **A number** of our staff **are** going on leave.

7. In sentences containing the words 'one of', the verb is chosen as follows:

- In simple form, one of or one of the, a singular verb is used.
 - **One of the** reasons for his demotion **is** his carelessness.
 - **One of the pens is** missing from my desk.

The sentences containing phrases 'one of those who' or 'one of the things that', a plural verb is required.

- **He is one of those** managers who **favour** increasing the staff.

Here favour agrees with those. In the phrase one of those who, those is the plural object of the preposition of. In the subordinate clause who favour, the relative pronoun who is the subject and must agree with its antecedent those.

➤ Mr. Verma **is one of our officers** who **is** accompanying me.

➤ He **is one of our employees** who **are** always alert.

However, when only precedes one of / one of those, a singular verb is used.

➤ Ramesh **is only one of our employees** who **is** always alert.

➤ Mr Verma **is the only one of our officers** accompanying me.

8. Rule of singular nouns and plural verbs

Certain collective nouns, those who are singular in form, are always used in the plural sense and take a plural verb. For e.g. gentry, cattle, poultry, alphabets, offspring etc.

➤ These **poultry are** ready for sale.

➤ There **are 26 alphabets** in English.

➤ The **cattle are** grazing near the canal.

9. The always singular nouns

Certain nouns are always used in singular and followed by singular verbs. These are not used in the plural sense and do not take on plural verbs. For e.g. **hair, issue, advice, information, scenery, luggage, mischief, bread, abuse, furniture, land, business, machinery, poultry** etc. (Detailed discussion right after examples)

➤ Her **hair has** turned grey now.

➤ The **scenery of Kasauli is** beautiful.

➤ **Is there any information** in this regard?

➤ **All the machinery is** old.

➤ I **have sold all the furniture** that was useless.

➤ My **luggage is** lying at the bus stand.

COUNTABLE Vs. UNCOUNTABLE

Countable Nouns: These are the names of objects, people etc. that we can count, e.g. book, pen, apple, boy, sister, doctor, horse.

Uncountable nouns: These are the names of things, which we cannot count, e.g., milk, oil, sugar, gold, and honesty. They mainly denote substances and abstract things.

E.g. Nature (uncountable)

NOTE:

- **Countable nouns** have plural forms and can be used with **a/an**.

Uncountable nouns do not have plural forms and cannot be used with **a/an**.

For e.g. we say books but we do not say “milks”.

- The following nouns are usually uncountable in English: **Advice, news, information, furniture, luggage work, business, weather, traffic, scenery, paper, and bread.** Most of these are **countable in Indian languages** and therefore Indian students often wrongly use them with ‘a/an’ and in the plural.

Example:

- He gave me **an advice**. (Incorrect) (ek se kya hoga??)
- He gave me **some advice** (correct) (or, a piece of advice)
- The **sceneries** here **are** very good. (Incorrect)
- The **scenery** here **is** very good. (Correct)

10. Each, every, either, neither

The words ‘each, every, either, neither’, used as pronouns or else adjectives, are always singular and require singular verbs.

- **Each of them does have** political ambitions.
- **Each employee is** responsible for clearing is desk in the evening.
- **Neither of the boys is** eligible for taking the examination.
- **Neither boy is** eligible for selection.

EXCEPTION: If a parenthetical each follows a plural noun or pronoun, the verb should be singular.

- The **members each feel their** responsibility.
- **They each have their own** problem.
- 10 **each of these books** is required.

11. All, any, many

All, any, more, most, some – may be singular or plural depending on the meaning, and take verbs accordingly.

- **Some of the books** seem too old.
- **Some of the food is** not good. (food is a singular noun)
- **All the typing has** been finished. (typing is an activity. Can't be plural)
- **All the reports have** been typed.
- **Most of the goods have** been sold.
- **Most of the stock has** been sold, but more of these shirts are due. (stock is always singular)

12. The titles of books or magazines are considered singular and take singular verbs.

- The **Hindustan times** still **has** wide circulation.
- The **Shiva Trilogy** **is** a best seller.

13. The always singular words which take singular verbs

The following words and their compounds are always singular and requires a singular verb.

Body (anybody, everybody, nobody, somebody)

Thing (anything, everything, nothing, something)

One (anyone, everyone, no one, someone)

- **Something** is wrong **with him** these days.
- **Everybody** in the office **has** tickets.
- **Everyone** **is** required to clear their dues.
- **Nobody** **knows** the trouble I have seen.
- **No one** **is** entitled to have his debts cancelled.

14. Rules for relative pronouns

A relative pronoun is one which establishes a relationship between two subjects (who, which, that). When it is used as a subject, it takes a singular or plural verb to accord with its antecedent i.e. if the subject is singular, use a singular verb and so on.

- Measles is among the **diseases that are curable**.
- This is only one of the **local papers that print** a weekly horoscope.

EXERCISE 7

Fill in the blanks.

1. Every pale tomato slice, wilted pickle, and brown lettuce leaf _____ (cost/**costs**) an extra 25 cents at Bernie's Burger Emporium.
2. Not only the Smiths but also Tonya _____ (**has**/have) agreed to try one of the world-famous chocolate-broccoli muffins.
3. The Smiths, along with Tonya, _____ (**hope**/hopes) to avoid indigestion after eating these weird muffins.
4. On the sidewalk _____ (is/**are**) many little lizards sunning themselves on the hot concrete.
5. Even though Antonio has many friends who love their Chevrolets and Buicks, he has always believed that General Motors _____ (**makes**/make) lemons.
6. My dog Floyd, together with Buster the cat, _____ (**likes**/like) to play with money; the cat swats crumpled bills onto the floor where the dog shreds them to pieces.
7. Even though Johnson and Johnson _____ (warm/**warms**) consumers not to insert Q-tips into their ears, people refuse to read directions and frequently puncture their eardrums.
8. All of my important keys _____ (is/**are**) now stuck in the drain pipe of my bathroom sink. Buster, my kitten, doesn't realize how much his playfulness inconveniences me.

9. Grandpa claims that Martian measles _____ (causes/cause) green and purple spots to erupt all over a person's body.
10. The dog, digging holes in the sofa cushions _____ (is/are) Peanut, Elizabeth's new puppy.
11. Even though the jury _____ (want/wants) to believe that the defendant did not feed Elvis to the Loch Ness Monster, much of the evidence points to the guilt.
12. Neither the students nor their instructor _____ (is/are) happy with the long cafeteria line for squid eyeball stew.
13. Neither of Freud's parents _____ (has/have) much intelligence when it comes to choosing spouses. Freud's father has married five times, and Mom just presented him with stepfather number three.
14. Each of these women _____ (wish/wishes) that she had read the care instructions before washing the delicate and expensive dresses.
15. Who needs a pet if you live in Florida? There already _____ (is/are) lizards that sneak in between the window screens and cockroaches that take up residence in every bathroom and kitchen.
16. Susan is one of those students who _____ (kiss/kisses) up to the instructor every chance that they get.
17. There _____ (is/are) more calories in a bowl of chocolate-broccoli breakfast cereal than you might think.

SESSION - 5

🔗 PUNCTUATIONS

To fully understand basic grammar rules, you also need to look at punctuation rules.

- **Capitalization** is important. All sentences must start with a capital, or upper-case, letter. Titles of people, books, magazines, movies, specific places, etc. are capitalized. Organizations and compass points are capitalized.
- Every sentence needs a **punctuation mark** at the end of it. These include a period, exclamation mark, or question mark.
- **Colons** are used to separate a sentence from a list of items, to introduce a long, direct quote, or between two sentences (or clauses) when the second one explains the first.
- **Semicolons** can take the place of a conjunction and are placed before introductory words like "therefore" or "however." They are also used to separate a list of things if there are commas within each unit.
- There are a lot of rules for **commas**. The basic ones are that commas separate things in a series and go wherever there is a pause in the sentence. They surround the name of a person being addressed, separate the day of the month from the year in a date, and separate a town from the state.
- **Parentheses** enclose things that clarify or numbers and letters that are part of a list.
- **Apostrophes** are used in contractions to take the place of one or more letters and also to show possession. An apostrophe and "s" is added if the noun is singular and an apostrophe alone is added if the noun is plural.