

# **Subject Verb Agreement**

**Eng 1011  
ChMR**

# Subject Verb Agreement :

Subject-verb agreement means that a subject and its verb must be both singular or both plural. The subject and the verb agrees / matches each other.

- A singular subject (one person or thing) takes a singular verb
- A plural subject (more than one person or thing) takes a plural verb
- Usually either the verb or the subject will contain -s, not at the same time.

If the subject is Plural

- Subject + s
- Verb - s
- The **dogs look** cute.

If the subject is Singular

- Subject - s
- Verb + s
- The **dog looks** cute.

# First Person, Second Person & Third Person :

First and second person singular subject : I, you (takes plural form of verb)

Third person singular subject : He, she, it (takes singular form of verb)

- I \_\_\_\_\_ (**like/likes**) to eat
- He \_\_\_\_\_ (**like/likes**) to eat

# First Person, Second Person & Third Person :

First and second person singular subject : I, you (takes plural form of verb)

Third person singular subject : He, she, it (takes singular form of verb)

- I **like** to eat
- He **likes** to eat

# Auxiliary Verb :

do/does

- The **dogs** \_\_\_\_\_ (**don't/doesn't**) look cute
- The **dog** \_\_\_\_\_ (**don't/doesn't**) look cute

am/is/are

- The **dogs** \_\_\_\_\_ (**is/are**) cute
- The **dog** \_\_\_\_\_ (**is/are**) cute

have/has

- **They** \_\_\_\_\_ (**have/has**) been eating for an hour.
- **He** \_\_\_\_\_ (**have/has**) been driving for an hour.

# Auxiliary Verb :

do/does

- The **dogs don't** look cute
- The **dog doesn't** look cute

am/is/are

- The **dogs are** cute
- The **dog is** cute

have/has

- **They have** been eating for an hour.
- **He has** been driving for an hour.

# Modal Auxiliary Verb :

may/could/ will/ must/ should - (The verb following the modal verb is never in the s form)

- The **dog** will \_\_\_\_\_ (**eat/eats**) now.
- The **dogs** will \_\_\_\_\_ (**eat**) now.

# Modal Auxiliary Verb :

may/could/ will/ must/ should - (The verb following the modal verb is never in the s form)

- The **dog** will **eat** now.
- The **dogs** will **eat** now.



# Prepositional Phrases :

Words that come between the subject and the verb do not change subject-verb agreement.

- **The tomatoes** in the salad \_\_\_\_\_ (is / are) brown and mushy.
- **The salad** \_\_\_\_\_ (is / are) brown and mushy.
- **The price** of the speakers \_\_\_\_\_ (is / are) too high for me.

about	before	by	inside	over
above	behind	during	into	through
across	below	except	like	to
among	beneath	for	of	toward
around	beside	from	off	under
at	between	in	on, onto	with

# Prepositional Phrases :

Words that come between the subject and the verb do not change subject-verb agreement.

- **The tomatoes ~~in the salad~~ *are*** brown and mushy. / **The salad *is*** brown and mushy.
- **The price ~~of the speakers~~ *is*** too high for me.

about	before	by	inside	over
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# Compound Subjects :

## And

1. Singular noun + singular noun = plural subject + plural verb

- My cat **and** dog \_\_\_\_\_ (**is / are**) friends.

2. Plural noun + plural noun = plural subject + plural verb

- Cats **and** dogs \_\_\_\_\_ (**is / are**) my favorite animals.

3. If the compound subject refers to one person or thing or generally conveys the idea of a unit - Singular subject + Singular verb

- **My neighbor and closest friend** \_\_\_\_\_ (**is / are**) Susan. [one person]
- **Macaroni and cheese** \_\_\_\_\_ (**is / are**) on the lunch menu. [one dish]

# Compound Subjects :

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- My cat **and** dog **are** friends.

2. Plural noun + plural noun = plural subject + plural verb

- Cats **and** dogs **are** my favorite animals.

3. If the compound subject refers to one person or thing or generally conveys the idea of a unit - Singular subject + Singular verb

- **My neighbor and closest friend is** Susan. [one person]
- **Macaroni and cheese is** on the lunch menu. [one dish]

Or, either . . . or, neither . . . nor, not only . . . but also,

The verb agrees with the subject closer to the verb.

- Cats or **dogs** \_\_\_\_\_ (**make** / **makes** ) good friends.
- Neither Phil nor **Ali** \_\_\_\_\_ (**is** / **are**) here today.
- Either the restaurant manager or **his assistants** \_\_\_\_\_ (**deserves/deserve**) to be fired.
- Either the assistants or the **restaurant manager** \_\_\_\_\_ (**deserves/deserve**)to be fired.

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- Either the assistants or the **restaurant manager deserves** to be fired.

# Inverted Word Order :

## When a verb comes before the subject

A verb agrees with its subject even when the verb comes before the subject

- At the street corner \_\_\_\_\_ (**was/were**) **two dogs**.
- Under the sofa \_\_\_\_\_ (**was/were**) **a frightened mouse**.
- Where \_\_\_\_\_ (**is/are**) **the instructions** for this game?
- Words that may come before the subject include : there, here, and, in questions, who, which, what, and where
- When unsure about the subject, ask who or what of the verb.

## Compound subject follows the verb

- There \_\_\_\_\_ (**is/are**) two restaurants **and** a motel on that block.
- Here \_\_\_\_\_ (**come /comes** ) **Samantha or Sue**.

# Inverted Word Order :

## When a verb comes before the subject

A verb agrees with its subject even when the verb comes before the subject

- At the street corner **were two dogs.**
- Under the sofa **was a frightened mouse.**
- Where **are the instructions** for this game?
  
- Words that may come before the subject include : there, here, and, in questions, who, which, what, and where
- When unsure about the subject, ask who or what of the verb.

## Compound subject follows the verb

- There **are** two restaurants **and** a motel on that block.
- Here **comes Samantha or Sue.**



# Indefinite Pronouns as Subjects :

Always singular	Always plural	Either singular or plural
<p>One Anybody, Anyone, Anything Nobody, No one, Nothing Somebody, Someone, Something Everybody, Everyone, Everything Each, Much <b>*Either, Neither</b></p> <p>* Either and neither are singular if they are not used with or and nor.</p>	<p>Both Few Several Many Others</p>	<p>All, Enough, Most, Plenty, Any , More, None, Some</p> <p>* Singular - when they refer to a portion or to a single person. place, or thing.</p> <p>* Plural - when they refer to a number of individual persons, places, or things.</p> <p>* In some cases, the object of a prepositional phrase determines whether the verb is singular or plural.</p>

<p><b>Always singular</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>No one</b> _____ (were /was) able to answer the question.</li> <li>- <b>Everyone</b> _____ (likes /like ) a good story</li> </ul> <p><i>*Exception</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Neither</b> of you _____ (is / are) responsible enough to handle it.</li> <li>- Neither George nor <b>Elena</b> _____ (likes /like ) to roller-skate.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Always plural</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Many</b> _____ (is / are) called, but <b>few</b> _____ (is / are) chosen.</li> <li>- <b>Both</b> _____ (is / are) at the top of their class.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Either singular or plural</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Some</b> of the <b>yard</b> _____ (is / are) dirty.</li> <li>- <b>Most</b> of our <b>customers</b> _____ (is / are) loyal.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Always singular</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>No one was</b> able to answer the question.</li> <li>- <b>Everyone likes</b> a good story</li> </ul> <p><i>*Exception</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Neither</b> of you <b>is</b> responsible enough to handle it.</li> <li>- <del>Neither George nor</del> <b>Elena likes</b> to roller-skate.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Always plural</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Many are</b> called, but <b>few are</b> chosen.</li> <li>- <b>Both are</b> at the top of their class.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Either singular or plural</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Some</b> of the <u>yard</u> <b>is</b> dirty. (Some refers to a portion of the yard and is therefore singular.)</li> <li>- <b>Most</b> of our <u>customers</u> <b>are</b> loyal. (Most refers to the plural noun customers, so a plural verb is used)</li> </ul>

# Every and Many a :

When the adjectives **every** and **many a** precede single or compound subjects, they emphasize that the subjects are individuals rather than groups.

- **Every** actor, chorus member, and stagehand in this room \_\_\_\_\_  
(**deserves/deserve** ) praise.
- **Every** boy \_\_\_\_\_ (**deserves/deserve** ) praise
- **Many a** good sailor \_\_\_\_\_ (**has/have**) fallen into the water.

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# Collective Nouns as Subjects :

Team, crowd, fleet, class, committee, jury, family, band

Single Unit - Singular verb	Parts of a Group - Plural verb
<p>If a collective noun refers to a group as a single unit, use a Singular verb.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- The <b>team</b> _____ (goes /go ) to practice at 4:00. [Together, singular]</li><li>- The <b>family</b> _____ (is /are )a very old and famous one.</li></ul>	<p>If a collective noun refers to the individual members or parts of a group, use a Plural verb.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- The <b>team</b> _____ (goes /go )to their own homes after practice. [Separately, plural]</li><li>- The <b>family members</b> _____ (is /are)delighted with their presents.</li></ul>

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# Nouns Ending in S :

Plural in form but singular in meaning	Refers to one thing or one pair but takes a plural verb	Singular or Plural depending on the meaning of the sentence
<p>News, measles, physics, mathematics, economics</p> <p>* Subjects and diseases</p> <p>* Removing the s does not leave a singular noun</p> <p>- The <b>news</b> _____ (seems /seem ) good.</p> <p>- <b>Physics</b> _____ (was /were ) my most difficult subject</p>	<p>Scissors, shorts, eyeglasses, pants, jeans, trousers, spectacles, clothes, thanks</p> <p>* If these words are preceded by the phrase <b>a pair of</b>, they will be regarded as singular subjects</p> <p>- His <b>pants</b> _____ (looks /look ) too long</p> <p>- <b>A pair of pants</b> _____ (is /are ) needed.</p>	<p>Politics, athletics, works, headquarters</p>



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<p>News, measles, physics, mathematics, economics</p> <p>* Subjects and diseases</p> <p>* Removing the s does not leave a singular noun</p> <p>- The <b>news seems</b> good.</p> <p>- <b>Physics was</b> my most difficult subject</p>	<p>Scissors, shorts, eyeglasses, pants, jeans, trousers, spectacles, clothes, thanks</p> <p>* If these words are preceded by the phrase <b>a pair of</b>, they will be regarded as singular subjects</p> <p>- His <b>pants look</b> too long</p> <p>- <b>A pair of pants is</b> needed.</p>	<p>Politics, athletics, works, headquarters</p>

# Titles, Names :

- The title of a book, story, play, movie, television program, musical composition, or magazine refers to an individual work - is singular, even though it may include plural words.
  - **Friends** \_\_\_\_\_ (**is/are**) a funny series.
- The name of a country or of an organization is also singular when it refers to an entire country or group.
  - **The Maldives** \_\_\_\_\_ (**is/are**) a pretty place

# Titles, Names :

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  - **Friends is** a funny series.
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  - **The Maldives is** a pretty place

# Amounts, Time :

- A fraction, a measurement, an amount of money, distance, or a specific interval of time (when it refers to a single unit) - Singular verb
  - **Five dollars** \_\_\_\_\_ (**is/are**) too much to spend for that plant.
- A length of time or an amount ( When they are considered as a number of separate units)
  - **Two dimes** \_\_\_\_\_ (**was/were**) left in the phone booth.

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- A length of time or an amount ( When they are considered as a number of separate units)
  - **Two dimes were** left in the phone booth.

1. Books & Periodicals \_\_\_\_\_ (is/are) a famous shop in Dhaka.
2. The family along with their relatives \_\_\_\_\_ (is/are) planning for a vacation.
3. The book \_\_\_\_\_ (is/are) mine.
4. The books \_\_\_\_\_ (is/are) mine.
5. The pen and the books \_\_\_\_\_ (is/are) mine.
6. The books and the pen \_\_\_\_\_ (is/are) mine.
7. Nan and Grill \_\_\_\_\_ (is/are) on the menu.
8. Mine \_\_\_\_\_ (is/are) the pen and the books .
9. Either the pen or the books \_\_\_\_\_ (is/are) mine.
10. Either the book or the pen \_\_\_\_\_ (is/are) mine.
11. Mine \_\_\_\_\_ (is/are) the pen or the books.
12. Mine \_\_\_\_\_ (is/are) the books or the pen.
13. Neither of the book \_\_\_\_\_ (is/are) mine.
14. Either of the book \_\_\_\_\_ (is/are) mine.

15. One of the book \_\_\_\_\_ (is/are) mine.
16. Everyone \_\_\_\_\_ (like/likes) books.
17. Every book \_\_\_\_\_ (is/are) good.
18. Every book and pen \_\_\_\_\_ (is/are) good.
19. Many a book \_\_\_\_\_ (is/are) good.
20. Many books \_\_\_\_\_ (is/are) good.
21. Most of the books \_\_\_\_\_ (is/are) romantic.
22. Most of the book \_\_\_\_\_ (is/are) romantic.
23. These jeans \_\_\_\_\_ (is/are) comfortable.
24. A pair of jeans \_\_\_\_\_ (is/are) comfortable.
25. 5 years \_\_\_\_\_ (is/are) the maximum for that offence.
26. Ten hours \_\_\_\_\_ (is/are) spent on that project.

1. The cup next to the glasses \_\_\_\_\_(look/looks) clean.
2. Either the twins or Ralph \_\_\_\_\_(is/are) at home this evening.
3. Most of my homework assignment \_\_\_\_\_(are/is) done.
4. The boys and their father \_\_\_\_\_(is/are) hiking this weekend.
5. Everyone\_\_\_\_\_ (like/likes) a good story.
6. The gray trousers \_\_\_\_\_ (is/are) looking good on you.
7. Every student and teacher \_\_\_\_\_ (is/are) to leave the building in the event of a fire drill.
8. Many a student \_\_\_\_\_(look/looks) forward to vacation.