

Billiards is my favourite game.

‘Means’ is used either as singular or plural. But when it has the meaning of ‘wealth’ it is always plural; as,

He succeeded by this means (or, by these means) in passing the examination.

His means are small, but he has incurred no debt.

38. Certain Collective Nouns, though singular in form, are always used as plurals; as,

Poultry, cattle, vermin, people, gentry.

These poultry are mine.

Whose are these cattle?

Vermin destroy our property and carry disease.

Who are those people (= persons)?

There are few gentry in this town.

Note:- As a Common Noun 'people' means a 'nation' and is used in both singular and plural; as,

The Japanese are a hard-working people.

There are many different peoples in Europe.

39. A Compound Noun generally forms its plural by adding -s to the principal word; as,

Singular -- Plural

Commander-in-chief -- commanders-in-chief

Coat-of-mail -- coats-of-mail

Son-in-Law -- sons-in-law

Page 13

Daughter-in-law -- daughters-in-law

Step-son -- step-sons

Step-daughter -- step-daughters

Maid-servant -- maid-servants (but man-servant, plural men-servants)

Passer-by -- passers-by

Looker-on -- lookers-on

Man-of-war -- men-of-war.

We say spoonfuls and handfuls, because spoonful and handful are regarded as one word.

Note that the Proper Nouns Brahman and Mussulman are not compounds of man; therefore their plurals are Brahmans and Mussulmans.

40. Many nouns taken from foreign languages keep their original plural form; as,
Form Latin

Erratum, errata; -- formula, formulae (or formulas):

index, indices; -- memorandum, memoranda;

radius, radii; -- terminus, termini (or terminuses).