**Subject-Verb Agreement**

Look at the following sentences and identify the subject and verb in each sentence:

* She is a badminton player.
* They are working on a project.
* I am reading a book.

If we write the same sentences as follows:

* She are a badminton player.
* They is working on a project.
* I is reading a book.

Sentences written above are not correct as the verbs in these sentences don’t agree with their respective subjects. In a sentence, the verb must agree with its subject in number and person.

**Subject-Verb Agreement**

A Sentence is a structured string of words in a language. Every word in a sentence is used under a pattern or scheme that is called agreement. Subject and verb, the two most important elements should also be in agreement.

| **Condition & Rules** | **Examples** | **Agreement** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 1. **The verb must agree with the subject in number and person.**   **(Third person pronoun: he/ she/ it/ they/ Ram/ Mohan/ Sita/ etc.)**  If the subject is in singular number, the verb should also be in singular number.  If the subject is in plural number, the verb should also be in plural number. | **He is** the CR of the class**.**  **She** **is** my best friend.  **I am** drinking water  **They are** going to watch movie today.  We were playing a game yesterday. | He (Singular Subject)  is (Singular verb)  She (Singular Subject)  is (Singular verb)  I (Singular Subject)  am (Singular verb)  They(Plural Subject )  are **(**plural verb) yesterday.  **We** (Plural Subject )  were **(**plural verb). |
| When the subject and verb are placed separately:Find the head of the phrases and clauses to identify the subject and use the verb accordingly. | Phrase  The **weather** in mountainous regions **is** treacherous during the winter.  **A box** of sweet mangoes **is** in the car.  clause  **Storms** that occur during winter causedeep snow drifts.  **The boys** standing in the corner **are** hockey players. | Weather (Singular Subject)  is (Singular verb)    A box (Singular Subject)  is (Singular verb)  Storms (Plural Subject)  Cause (Plural Verb)  The boys (Plural Subject)  Are (Plural Verb) |
| 1. **When the subject has two or more parts and it is connected with: ‘And’**   If two or more singular subjects are connected by **‘and’, plural number verb** will be used**.**  **Note:** With pair words, connected with ‘and’, that denote single idea, singular verb is used. Some of these pair words are-  Bread and Butter, Hammer and Sickle, Slow and Steady, Horse and Carriage, Crown and Glory, Rise and Fall, Law and order, etc.  **‘additive phrases’ such as-**  along with, in addition to, as well as, together with, unlike, nothing but  **Verb is used according to subject that is placed first.** | **Mukesh is joining** GLA university this year**.**  **Mukesh and his brother are joining** GLA university this year**.**  Silver, gold **and** other metals **are** minedin Western Australia.  **Slow and steady wins** the race.  There is **hammer and sickle**.  **Manisha** as well as her sisters **has** chosen IT Branch.  **They** along with their friend **have** filled the examination form. | Mukesh (Singular Subject)  Is joining (singular verb)  Mukesh and his brother (Plural Subject)  Are joining (Plural verb)  Silver, gold **and** other metals (Plural Subject)  are mined (Plural verb)  Slow and Steady (plural subject)  Wins (Singular verb)  Hammer and sickle (Singular Subject)  Is (Singular Subject)  Manisha (singular Subject)  has(singular verb)  They (plural subject)  have (plural verb) |
| 4. **When subject follows the verb, especially**  **the sentence starts with there, here, this,**  **that, it.**  **verb is always used according to the subject.** | There are many new courses available in the field of computer science. Here **begins** the unforgettable extravaganza of **annual youth fest** in Engineering College. |  |
| 5. When parts of the subject are connected by 'or', 'nor', 'either . . . or', 'neither . . . nor', none but words, the verb agrees with the subject nearest to it. | Neither Rohan nor **his friends** **have submitted** the assignment.  Rohan or **Sonu** goes to school. | his friends (plural subject)  have submitted (plural verb form)  Sonu (Singular Subject)  Goes (Singular Verb) |
| 6. When Subject is an Indefinite Pronoun'each', 'either', 'neither', 'another', 'anyone', 'anybody', 'anything', 'someone', 'somebody', 'something', 'one', 'everyone', 'everybody', 'everything', 'no one', ‘nobody', 'nothing'*,*singular verb is used. When the pronouns 'both', 'many', 'few', 'several', 'other', are used in a sentence,  P**lural verb is used.**    Words like 'none', 'any', 'all', 'more', 'most', 'some'  **take singular or plural verb,** **depending on the context.** | **Everyone** in the group **has** a job  to do to complete the project in time.  **Nobody is** **going** to help Shanaya in  preparing dinner tonight.  **Many of the students** in the group **work** consistently.  **Both of my friends are working** in the same MNC  **All** of the project **work** **was** done by the students of B. Tech III year.    **All** the **projects** **were** submitted in time by B. Tech III year students. | Everyone (Singular subject )  am (Singular verb)  Nobody (Singular Subject)  is going (Singular verb Many of the students (plural Subject)Work (Plural verb)Both of my friends (plural Subject)Are working (Plural verb) Work (Singular Subject)  was (singular verb)  Projects (Plural subject )  Were (plural form of verb) |
| 6. If the subject is a collective noun or non-count noun Collective nouns (e.g., team, committee, family, crowd, audience, government)  **singular verb is used when referred as single unit otherwise plural verb is used.** | The **committee was** unanimous  in the decision to suspend the students who had cheated in the examination.  The **committee were** divided in the decision to suspend the students who had cheated in the examination. | Committee (Collective noun/singular subject) was(singular verb )  Committee (Collective noun/Plural subject  Were (Plural verb) |
| 6. With an **uncountable noun** (e.g. sugar, water, news) , **singular verb is used** | Two spoon **sugar is** added to make one cup tea.  Milk is good for health. | Sugar (Non-count/singular subject)  is (singular verb) Milk (Singular Subject)Is ( Singular Verb) |
| 7. Inverted Subject-Verb Order The sentence may begin   * with a prepositional phrase * the verb forms of *do/be/ have* * by adverb   To identify subject, ask *Who?* or *What?* is doing the action and the verb is used accordingly- | In the center of the mall **stand** **four statues**.  Do the **students consent** to the terms in the contract of participation in the contest?  Is he reading a book?  Are they reading a book?  Am I looking smart?  So quickly **does he** answer the questions in the quiz that we all are surprised | four statues (Plural Subject)stand (Plural verb)Students (Plural Subject)Do consent (Plural verb)He (Singular Subject)Is reading (Singular Verb)They (Plural Subject)Are reading (Plural verbI (Singular Subject)Am looking (Singular Verb)He (Singular Subject)does answer (Singular Verb) |
| 8. With Linking Verbs In sentences with **linking verbs** (verbs that link or join the subject with an adjective, a noun, or a pronoun), the **verb agrees with the subject, not with the subject complement.** | Sita’s favourite **food** **is** chocolate cookies.  **Chocolate cookies** **are** Jake’s favorite food. | Food (Singular Subject)  Is (Singular Verb ) Chocolate chip cookies (Plural Subject)are (Plural Verb) |
| 9. With Relative Pronouns When a relative pronoun (*who, which, that, what, whatever,* and *whoever*) is used to introduce a dependent clause, that **verb in the clause should agree in number with the pronoun’s antecedent** (the word to which the pronoun refers). | Jake is the only **one** who **has** a security pass. These are the boys who have completed their assignment. | One (singular subject)has (singular verb)Boys (Plural Subject)Have completed ( Plural Verb) |
| **10**. **Plural subject specific to amount, sum, distance etc**.  When plural subject explains specific amount, sum, distance, quantity, time, period as a whole  **Singular verb is used.** | **Five miles** **i**s not a long distance to go by car.  **Five years is** the maximum sentence for that offense. | Five miles (Singular subject) denoting specific distanceis (singular verb)Five years (Singular subject)is (Singular verb) |
| 11. If one subject is denoted by two singular nouns using one article, **Singular verb is used**  When different subjects are denoted by two singular nouns using two articles, **Plural Verb is used** | **The professor and HoD is** presiding over the meeting for discussing the strategies to face the situation.    **The Professor and the HoD are** going to participate in a conference. | The Professor and HoD (Singular Subject/Same person)  is presiding (Singular verb)  The professor and the head (Plural Subject/different persons)  Are going (plural verb ) |
| 12. Some nouns appear to be singular but they have plural meaning asCattle, poultry, gentry, police, infantryPlural verb is used | The police have helped in distributing food for the poor people.The infantry have marched forward. | The police (Plural Subject)Have (plural verb)The infantry (Plural Subject)Have marched (plural verb) |
| 13. Some nouns appear to be in plural number but they are followed by singular verb. | Mathematics is a very interesting subject.Gymnastics is my favourite game. |  |
| 13. Some nouns are always used as singular as-Scenery, furniture, advice, information, hair luggage, jewellery, baggageSo singular verb is used with them | The **furniture** **was** worn and rustic with wooden frames and upholstered cushions.  This information is incorrect. | Furniture (Singular subject)Was (Singular verb)Information (Singular Verb)Is (Singular Verb) |
| 14. With fractions, percentages and indefinite quantifiers (e.g., all, few, many, much, some), the verb agrees with the preceding noun or clause: | **One-third** of this note **is** taken up with statistical analysis.  **Much** of the book **seems** relevant to this study. | One-third (Singular Subject)Is (Singular Verb)Much (Singular subject)Seems (Singular verb) |