



Subject Verb Agreement

Within a sentence, the subject and the verb must agree in number. That is, a singular noun or pronoun (referring to a single thing) must be followed by a verb in the singular form. A plural noun or pronoun takes a verb in the plural form.

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

She and her friends **are** at the fair.

2. When two or more singular nouns or pronouns are connected by *or* or *nor*, use a singular verb.

The book or the pen **is** in the drawer.

3. When a phrase comes between the subject and the verb, the verb agrees with the subject of the sentence, not with a noun or pronoun in the phrase.

One of the boxes **is** open

The people who listen to that music **are** few.

The team captain, as well as his players, **is** anxious.

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

Each of these hot dogs **is** juicy.

Everybody **knows** Mr. Jones.

Either **is** correct.

5. Nouns such as *civics*, *mathematics*, *measles*, and *news* require singular verbs.

The news **is** on at six.

Note: The word *dollars* is a special case. When talking about an amount of money, it requires a singular verb, but when referring to the dollars themselves, a plural verb is required.

Five dollars **is** a lot of money.

Dollars **are** often used instead of rubles in Russia.



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6. Nouns such as *scissors*, *tweezers*, *trousers*, and *shears* require plural verbs. (There are two parts to these things.)

These scissors **are** dull.

Those trousers **are** made of wool.

7. In sentences beginning with "there is" or "there are," the subject follows the verb. Since "there" is not the subject, the verb agrees with what follows.

There **are** many questions.

There **is** a question.

8. Collective nouns are words that imply more than one person but that are considered singular and take a singular verb. *Group*, *team*, *committee*, *class*, and *family* are examples of collective nouns.

The team **runs** during practice.

The committee **decides** how to proceed.

The family **has** a long history.

9. Expressions such as *along with*, *together with*, *including*, *accompanied by*, *in addition to*, or *as well* do not change the number of the subject. If the subject is singular, the verb is too.

The President, accompanied by his wife, **is** traveling to India.

All of the books, including yours, **are** in that box.