

## SUBJECT AND VERB AGREEMENT

### GENERAL RULE

The verb must agree with its subject in number and person.

☛ **RULE-1:** When two subjects are joined by 'AND' the verb is plural.

E.g.-My friend and his father are in India.

☛ **RULE-2:** When two singular nouns joined by AND refer to the same person or thing, the verb is singular.

E.g.-The secretary and treasurer has been arrested.

The district magistrate and collector is on leave today.

☛ **RULE-3:** Article 'THE' is used only once when the two nouns refer to the same person or thing. If the two nouns refer to different persons or things, article 'THE' is used before each noun. In such cases, the verb will be in the plural form.

E.g.-The secretary and the president have been given warm welcome.

☛ **RULE-4:** If two different singular nouns express one idea, the verb should be in the singular form.

E.g.-Bread and milk is good for Breakfast.

Rice and curry is my favorite dish.

☛ **RULE-5:** When two singular subjects are practically synonymous the verb should be in the singular form.

E.g.-The law and order situation in the state is under control

Peace and Prosperity is the need to the day.

☛ **RULE-6:** If two singular subjects combined by AND are preceded by each or every, the verb should be in the singular.

E.g.-Every boy and girl was present in the class Yesterday.

Every man and every woman has the right to express his or her view.

☛ **RULE-7:** When the subjects joined by (Either-or), (Neither-nor) are of different persons, the verb will agree in person and number with the noun nearest to it.

Also, the plural subject must be placed nearest to the verb.

E.g.-Either Radha or Rani has done this mischief.

Neither Mohini nor Ragini is beautiful

Neither you nor he is to take up this task.

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☛ **RULE-8:** If connectives like with, together with, 'as well as' accompanied by etc. are used to combine two subjects the verb agrees with the subject mentioned first.

E.g.-The actress, along with her manager and some friend, is attending the function.

Mr. Michael, accompanied by his wife and children is arriving tonight by train.

☛ **RULE-9:** When (Not only-but also) is used to combine two subjects, the verb agrees with the subject close to it.

E.g.-Not only Hari, but also his brothers were arrested.

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☛ **RULE-10:** Use of None/No.

None can take either a singular or a plural verb depending on the noun which follows it.

Structure [None + of the + (non-count noun) + singular verb]

E.g.-None of the counterfeit money has been found.

Structure: [None + of the + (plural count. noun) + plural verb]

E.g.-None of the students have finished the exam yet.

No can take either a singular or plural verb depending on the noun which follows it.

Structure: [No + Singular Noun + Singular Verb ]

E.g.-No employee has received the salary.

Structure: [No + plural Noun + plural Verb ]

E.g.- No examples are relevant to this case.

☛ **RULE-11:** Many words indicating a number of people or animals are singular.

The following nouns are usually singular.

(If the individual members are acting separately, they are plural and take plural verb.)

[Congress, Family, Group, Committee, Class, Organisation, Team, Army, Club, Crowd, Government, Jury, Minority, Public]

E.g.- The family was happy at the news

The family were fighting over inheritance.

The committee have arrived by different trains.

The crowd was wild with excitement.

☛ **RULE-12:** Majority can be singular or plural. If it is alone it is usually singular, if it is followed by a plural noun, it is usually plural.

*Important note:* Majority by itself is singular but when majority refers to a set of people it is plural.

E.g.- A majority is always right.

A majority of students are right.



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☛ **RULE-13:** The number/ A number

The number is singular: The number of acres destroyed by wildfires has increased dramatically over the past several years.

A number is plural: A number of students are standing outside the office.

☛ **RULE-14:** Collective nouns indicating time, money and measurements used as a whole are Singular and take a singular verb.

E.g.- Twenty five rupees is not such a big amount for him.

Two miles is too much for this man to run.

### TRICKY RULES

☛ **RULE-1:** When a lot of, a great deal of, plenty of, most of and some of refer to plural numbers, a plural verb is used.

E.g.- A lot of people were present in the party.

Some of the students were absent.

But, if these expressions refer to an amount, the verb is in the singular number.

E.g. A lot of work has to be completed before we go.

A great deal of work has been finished.

☛ **RULE-2:** When the percentage or a part of something is mentioned with plural meaning the plural verb is used.

E.g.- 30 % of Indian women are literate.

☛ **RULE-3:** Barracks, Headquarters, Whereabouts, Alms, Species, Sheep, News, Deer, Premises, Shambles etc. remain same in singular as well as plural form.

E.g.-The company's headquarters is based in New York.

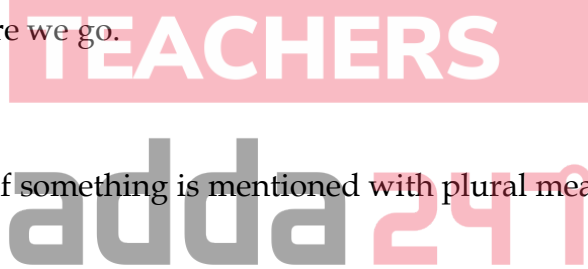
They tried to disrupt communications between the two headquarters.

☛ **RULE-4:** In sports, while referring to the players, the name of the country is followed by plural verb.


E.g. England have won the World Cup.

☛ **RULE-5:** When the word ENEMY is used in the sense 'Armed forces' of a nation with which one's country is at war, we have to use the plural verb.

E.g.-The enemy were forced to Retreat.



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☛ **RULE-6:** Abstract nouns usually take singular verbs.

E.g.- Truth eventually prevails.

Hatred has no limit.

The fragrance of this perfume is so overpowering.

☛ **RULE-7:** When sentences start with “there” or “here,” the subject will always be placed after the verb, so care needs to be taken to identify it correctly.

E.g.- There are four hurdles to jump.

Here are the keys.

There is a problem with the balance sheet.

Here are the papers you requested.

☛ **RULE 8.** Titles of books, movies, novels, etc. are treated as singular and take a singular verb.

E.g.-The Burbs is a movie starring Tom Hanks.

☛ **RULE 9.** When gerunds are used as the subject of a sentence, they take the singular verb form but, when they are linked by ‘and’ they take the plural form.

E.g.-Standing in the water was a bad idea.

Swimming in the ocean and playing drums are my hobbies.

☛ **RULE 10.** If two infinitives are separated by ‘and’ they take the plural form of the verb.

E.g.-To walk and to chew gum require great skill.

☛ **RULE 11.** Don’t get confused by the words that come between the subject and verb; they do not affect agreement rule.

E.g.-The dog that is chasing the squirrels belongs to Bridget.

☛ **RULE 12.** Inverted Sentences

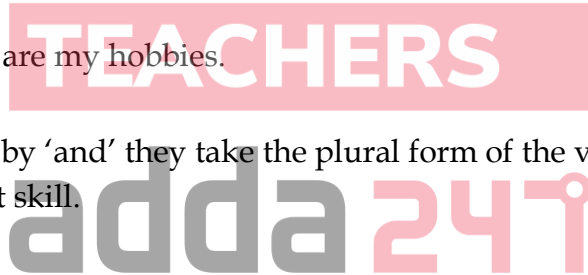
Usually in a sentence the subject always precedes the verb, but sometimes they can reverse this order, so that the verb comes before the subject.

**Incorrect:** Through the Golden Eagle Bridge passes thousands of vehicles every day.

In the above sentence, the singular verb passes is not referring to the singular ‘Golden Eagle Bridge’ but to the plural ‘thousands of vehicles’. Hence, the correct verb will be ‘pass’.

**Correct:** Through the Golden Eagle Bridge pass thousands of vehicles every day.

☛ **RULE 13.** Remember, only the subject affects the verb!



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