

Subject verb Agreement Rules

Rule 1: A verb must agree with its subject in number.

1. A book is on the table.
2. My books are on the table.

Rule 2: If two subjects are joined by 'and', the **plural verb** will be used.

Ram and Shyam are coming.

The boy and the girl are waiting outside the school.

Rule 3: But when the two nouns connected by and together represent the same person, same thing or same idea the verb used will be singular.

1. My friend, philosopher and guide has come.
2. Slow and steady wins the race.
3. Hardwork and luck takes one to success.
4. Bread and Butter -----a wholesome food.

Rule 4: If the subject is joined by 'as well as', 'with', 'alongwith', 'together with', 'and not', 'In addition to', 'but', 'besides', 'except', 'rather than', 'accompanied by', 'like', 'unlike', 'no less than', 'nothing but', the verb will agree with the **first subject**.

1. Ram, as well as his parents, is coming.
2. Pratik, along with his brother, is going to school.

Rule 5: If an **article** is placed just **before the 1st subject**, it means the **person/thing is the same** for which two nouns are used. Hence **singular verb will be used**.

1. A white and black gown was bought by her.

But if an article is used before every subject, it refers to **different people/things**. Hence **plural verb** will be used.

2. The director and the producer have come.

Rule 6: If two subjects are joined by 'neither....nor', 'either ... or', 'not only', '...'but also', 'nor', 'or', 'none-but', the **verb** will **agree** with the **nearest subject**.

1. Neither Ram nor Shyam **has** come.

Rule 7: Certain nouns are **plural in form but singular in meaning**. Hence they take **singular verb**.

Names	list
Names of diseases	Measles, Mumps, Rickets, Shingles etc.
Names of games	Billiards, Darts, Draughts etc.
Names of Countries	The United States, The West Indies etc.
Names of books	The Arabian Nights, Three Musketeers etc.
Names of subjects	Physics, Economics, Civics, Statistics, Politics, Linguistics.

1. Mathematics ---- (is,are)an interesting subject
2. Politics ---- (is,are)not my cup of tea.
3. No news ---- (is,are) good news.
4. Economics---- (is,are)an interesting subject.
5. Ethics ----- (demands,demand) honesty.
6. The Burbs ----- (is,are)a movie starring Tom Hanks.
7. Gone With the Wind ----- (is,are)my favorite movie of all time.

Rule 8: Collective noun always takes **a singular verb**.

1. The herd of cows is grazing in the field.
2. The committee has unanimously taken its decision.

However, the plural verb is used if the focus is on the individuals in the group. This is much less common.

3. The committee participate in various volunteer activities in their private lives.
4. The audience have taken their seats.

Rule 9:

Each, Every, Everyone, Someone, Somebody, Nobody, None, One, Any, Many a, More than one, are singular. Hence they will take a **singular verb**, **singular noun**, and **singular pronoun**.

1. Each student has come.
2. Each boy or each girl has come.
3. Many a man has come.
4. Many men have come.
5. **Each** of the participants was willing to be recorded.

Rule 10: A number of / 'a large number of' / 'a great number of' is used with plural countable noun. Hence they will take plural verb.

A number of students were present.

The number of boys is fifty.

Rule 11:

Scenery, Poetry, Furniture, Advice, Information, Hair, Business, Mischief, Bread, Stationery, Crockery, Luggage, Baggage, Postage, Knowledge, Wastage, Jewelry, Breakage, Equipment, Evidence, Work (works means literary pieces), News, Percentage, Dirt, Dust, Traffic, Electricity, Music, Confectionery, pottery, Bakery, Behaviour, Word (When used in sense of discussion)

1. The scenery of Kashmir has enchanted us.
2. I passed the exam but the percentage of marks was not good.
3. The mischief committed by him is unpardonable.
4. His hair is black

Rule 12: Certain nouns exist in **plural forms** only. Thus 's' cannot be removed from such nouns to make them singular. They take the plural verbs with them.

Scissors, tongs, bellows, trousers, pants, pajamas, shorts, Spectacles, goggles, binoculars, sunglasses, gallows, fangs, alms, amends, archives, arrears, auspices, congratulations, embers, fireworks, lodgings, outskirts, particulars, proceeds, regards, riches, remains, savings, shambles, surroundings, tidings, troops, tactics, thanks, valuables, wages, belongings, braces, etc.

1. Where are my pants?
2. Where are the tongs?
3. The proceeds were deposited in the bank.
4. All his assets were seized.

Rule 13: Cattle, cavalry, infantry, poultry, peasantry, children, gentry, police, and people are certain nouns that are **singular in form** but plural in meaning. They take plural verb 's' is never used with these nouns.

1. Cattle are grazing in the field.
2. Our infantry have marched forward.
3. Police have arrested the thieves.

Rule 14: Deer, sheep, series, species, fish, crew, team, jury, aircraft, counsel, are certain nouns that are used in both singular and plural form. If they are used in a singular sense, they take a singular verb

1. Our team is the best.

Rule 15: The words here, there, and where are not subjects. They introduce a sentence in inverted order. The verb must agree with the subject of a sentence.

1. Here is the package of letters.
2. There is little administrative support.
3. Here are the chocolates.
4. There is a problem with the balance sheet.

Rule 16: When any of 'few, many, several, both, all, some' is used with a countable noun, the verb is plural.

1. Some men are needed for the battle.

Rule 17: When any of 'few, many, several, both, all, some' is used with an uncountable noun, the verb is singular.

1. Some milk is spoilt.

Rule 18: In sentences that include sums of money, periods of time or distances etc. (as a unit), use singular verbs.

1. 500 rupees is a high price to pay.
2. 62 years is the minimum age of retirement.
3. 10 kilometers is too far to walk.

Rule 19: In the case of words such as 'a lot of', 'all', 'some' etc. in a sentence, pay attention to the noun after 'of'. If the noun after 'of' is singular then use a singular verb, if plural, use a plural verb.

1. All of the cake is gone.
2. All of the cakes are gone.
3. A lot of the cake is gone.
4. A lot of the cakes are gone.
5. Some of the cake is gone.
6. Some of the cakes are gone.

Rule 20: When gerunds are used as the subject of a sentence, they take the singular form of the verb. However, when they are linked by "and," they take the plural form.

Standing in the water *was* a bad idea.

Swimming in the ocean and playing **drums** *are* my hobbies.

- a. The lady in the car looks like your mother.
- b. Most of the milk is gone.
- c. One of the flowers has wilted.
- d. Either Ram or Shyam is coming today.
- e. Here is the newspaper.
- f. Civics is my favorite subject.

Choose the correct verb that agrees with the subjects and explain any five with the rules:

- 1.1. A bunch of Grapes -----(was/were)lying on the table)
- 2. Neither the Students nor the Teacher-----((was/were)available for the meeting.
- 3. Either the books or the Pens-----((is/are)missing from the desk.
- 4. Ten kilometres-----((is/are) long distance to run daily.
- 5. The committee -----((is/are) divided in their decision
- 6. Politics -----((is/are)often a controversial topic.
- 7. The pair of shoes-----((look/looks) stylish.
- 8. Each of the players-----((is/are)determined to win the match.
- 9. All the furniture in the room -----((need/needs)to be replaced.
- 10. Everyone in the team -----((work/works)hard to meet the deadline.
- 11. Some of the water -----((was/were) spilled on the floor.
- 12. Bread and Butter-----((is/are) served as a snack.