

# Grammar

## Part Six: Subject/Verb Agreement

### Subjects/Verbs Should Agree in Number

**Rule:** Match *singular* subjects with *singular* verbs and *plural* subjects with *plural* verbs.

Jenny's friend **is** in a good mood.

Singular  
Subject

Singular  
Verb

### Subjects/Verbs Should Agree in Number

**Rule:** Match *singular* subjects with *singular* verbs and *plural* subjects with *plural* verbs.

Jenny's friends **are** in a good mood.

Plural  
Subject

Plural  
Verb

## "I" and "You"

**Rule:** "I" and "you" almost always require plural verbs.

Dave likes that **I** **give** him ice cream on Sundays.

Plural Plural  
Subject Verb  
(Irregular)

## Doesn't and Don't

**Rule:** "Doesn't" means "does not." Since "does" is a singular verb, it goes with a singular subject. On the other hand, "don't" means "do not," and since "do" is a plural verb, it goes with a plural subject.

If **Dave** **doesn't** like the idea, he'll never go along with it.

Singular Singular  
Subject Verb

## Don't and Doesn't

**Rule:** "Don't" means "do not." Since "do" is a plural verb, it goes with a plural subject. On the other hand, "doesn't" means "does not," and since "does" is a singular verb, it goes with a singular subject.

If **Dave and his friend** **don't** like the idea, they'll never go along with it.

Plural Subject Plural Verb

## Here and There

**Rule:** If a sentence begins with "here" or "there," use the subject that follows to determine whether the verb is singular or plural.

**There** **is** **a delicious Slushy** in Dave's possession.

Singular  
Verb

Singular  
Noun

## Here and There

**Rule:** If a sentence begins with "here" or "there," use the subject that follows to determine whether the verb is singular or plural.

**Here** **are** **Dave's blog posts** about his recent adventures.

Plural  
Verb

Plural  
Noun

## Interrogative Subjects

**Rule:** In a question, use the subject that follows the verb to determine whether the verb is singular or plural.

**Are** **Dave's blog posts** about his recent adventures interesting?

Plural  
Verb

Plural  
Noun

### Singular + Plural Subject with "Or" or "Nor"

**Rule:** When combining a singular and plural subject using "or" or "nor," the subject that's closest to the verb should agree with it.

Either the chefs or the owner **has** to prepare Dave's food.

Singular  
Subject

Singular  
Verb

### "Or" & "Nor" with Singular Subjects

**Rule:** Use a singular verb when using "or" or "nor" to connect 2 singular subjects.

Neither Scott nor Susan **expects** me to be in class today.

Singular  
Subject

Singular  
Verb

### "Or" & "Nor" with Plural Subjects

**Rule:** Use a plural verb when using "or" or "nor" to connect 2 plural subjects.

Neither Kayla's friends nor the teachers **expect** her to be in class today.

Plural  
Subject

Plural  
Verb

# PRACTICE!

## Singular Collective Nouns

**Rule:** Collective nouns such as "group," "team," "town," "committee," "class," and "family" are singular when referring to one individual entity.

The **team** of swimmers **is** going to mention Dave's name tonight.

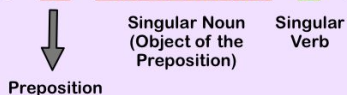
Singular  
Noun

Singular  
Verb

### Parts of a Whole w/ Singular Subject/Verb

**Rule:** When a subject refers to a portion ("fifty percent," "one-third," "the majority of," "part of," "some," "all", etc.) the verb matches the object of the preposition rather than the subject.

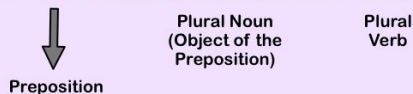
Two thirds **of** Dave's cake **is** already gone.



### Parts of a Whole w/ Plural Subject/Verb

**Rule:** When a subject refers to a portion ("fifty percent," "one-third," "the majority of," "part of," "some," "all", etc.) the verb matches the object of the preposition rather than the subject.

Two thirds **of** Dave's brownies **are** already gone.



### Mathematical Terms

**Rule:** Mathematical terms like "sum" and "product" are singular and require singular verbs.

Dave realized that the **sum** of two and five **is** seven.



## Money & Time

**Rule:** Sums of money or periods of time require singular verbs.

Dave hopes that **two years** **is** all it will take him to make the varsity squad.

Time Interval    Singular  
(Singular)      Verb

## Numbers

**Rule:** Generally, numbers greater than 1 take plural verbs.

Dave hopes that **two** books **are** enough to last him for the long flight.

Number                  Plural  
(Plural)                Verb

## Nouns With Multiple Parts

**Rule:** Nouns like "glasses," "scissors," "pants," "trousers," "sheers," "tweezers," "goggles," "shorts," etc. are plural because they refer to multiple parts of a single item. They require a plural verb.

Dave thought his **glasses** **were** on the couch, but they were in the freezer.

Plural  
Noun

Plural  
Verb

## Singular Nouns That End in "S"

**Rule:** Nouns like "news," "mathematics," "measles," "civics," "economics," "physics" are singular even though they end in -s. They require a singular verb.

**The news** **is** going to mention Dave's name tonight.

Singular  
Noun

Singular  
Verb



## Singular Indefinite Pronouns

**Rule:** The words "each", "either", "neither", "everyone", "every one", "everybody", "anyone", "any one", "anybody", "someone", "somebody", "nobody", and "no one" are all singular and require singular verbs.

**Each** ~~of Dave's friends~~ **is** going home to play video games.

Singular  
Subject

Prepositional Phrase  
(Cross it out if it helps you)

Singular  
Verb

## Plural Indefinite Pronouns

**Rule:** The words "both", "few", "many", "all," and "several" are all plural and require plural verbs.

**Many** ~~of Dave's friends~~ **are** going home to play video games.

Plural  
Subject

Prepositional Phrase  
(Cross it out if it helps you)

Plural  
Verb

## Phrases in between a Plural Subject and Verb

**Rule:** When a subject and verb are separated by a phrase like "along with," "together with," "as well as," "including," "accompanied by," "in addition to," "besides," or "not," ignore the phrase in the middle, and just make the verb agree with the subject.

The black couches, ~~as well as the Micky Mouse picture~~, **are** very stylish.

Plural Subject

Irrelevant Phrase (Cross this out if it helps you)

Plural Verb

## Singular Indefinite Pronouns

**Rule:** The words "each", "either", "neither", "everyone", "every one", "everybody", "anyone", "any one", "anybody", "someone", "somebody", "nobody", and "no one" are all singular and require singular verbs.

**Each** ~~of Dave's friends~~ **is** going home to play video games.

Singular  
Subject

Prepositional Phrase  
(Cross it out if it helps you)

Singular  
Verb

**PRACTICE!**