

Subject Verb Agreement

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What is Subject Verb Agreement?



Subject- Verb Agreement is a grammatical rule that states that the verb must agree in number with its subject.



Subjects and verbs, whether they are singular or plural must agree with one another in number.

Subject-Verb Agreement Rules

There are fifteen Subject-Verb Agreement Rules.



1. Two singular subjects connected by or or nor require a singular verb.

Example:

- My cousin **or** my brother is arriving by train tomorrow.
- The book **or** the diary is missing from the cupboard.

2. Two singular [subjects](#) connected by either /or or nether/nor require a Singular verb.

Example:

- Neither Neena nor Seema is around.
- Either John or Jacob is helping in the garage today.

3. When I is one of the subjects connected with either/ or or neither/ Nor put it second and follow it with the singular verb am.



Example:

- Neither he nor I am going to the party.
- Either she or I will attend the meeting.

4. When a singular subject is connected by or or nor to a plural subject put the plural subject last and use a plural verb.

Example:

- The dish or the plates go on that shelf.
- The girl nor her friends play in the evening.

5. When a singular & plural subject are connected by either/ or or neither/ nor, put the plural subject last and use a plural verb.

Example:

- Either Jenny or her friends are coming.
- Neither Arnold nor the boys were present.

6. Use a plural verb with two or more subjects when they are connected by and.

Example:

- The door and the window were closed.
- The knife and the fork are on the table.

7. Sometimes the subject is separated from the verb by words such as along ,with, as well besides. Ignore these when determining whether to use singular or plural verb.

Example:

- The leader along with his followers **is** expected today.
- Nervousness as well as tension **is** making her emotional.

8. The [pronouns](#) everyone, everybody anyone, anybody, someone, Somebody require singular verbs.

Example:

- Everyone **was** present for the ceremony.
- Everybody in the class plays well.

9. With words that indicate portions – percent, fraction, part majority- look at the noun in your phrase to determine whether to use singular or plural verb. If object of the preposition is plural, use plural verb. If object of [preposition](#) is singular, use singular verb.

Example:

- One-fourth of the **people are** unemployed.
- Eighty percent of the **cake has** disappeared.

10. The expression a number is followed by plural verb while the expression the number is followed by singular verb.

Example:

- A number of children **were** missing from the class.
- The number of chefs in that restaurant **is** five.

11. When neither or either are subjects, they always take singular verbs

Example:

- Neither of us **is** part of that group.
- Either of them **is** capable of delivering a public speech.

12. In sentences beginning with here or there, the subject follows the Verb.

Example:

- There are four hurdles to **jump**.

- Here is a cake to **sell**.

13. Use a singular verb with sums of money or periods of time.

Example:

- **Ten years** **is** the minimum period of imprisonment.
- **Two hundred rupees** **is** too expensive for this toy.

14. The pronouns who, that and which become singular or plural according to the noun directly in front of them. So if the noun is singular use a singular verb & if the noun is plural use a plural verb.



Example:

- Reema is the journalist who **writes** the reports.
- She is one of the women who **know** the work.

15. Collective nouns such as team and staff may be either singular or plural depending on their use in the sentence.

Example:

- The staff members **are** always in disagreement.
- The team **is** now playing in Kanpur.

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Reference Links:

- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-T4xw5C74Ps><http://www.towson.edu/ows/moduleSVAGR.htm>
- http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/sv_agr.htm
- http://www.myenglishteacher.net/subject_verb_agreement.html
- <http://www.yourdictionary.com/grammar-rules/20-Rules-of-subject-verb-agreement.html>

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