

Subjects and Verbs Must Agree

You already know that nouns, pronouns, and verbs can show number; that is, they can be singular or plural.

Subjects and verbs must agree in number.

If the subject is singular, the verb must be singular.

singular singular
My cat purrs when I pet her.

singular singular
She is a Persian cat.

If the subject is plural, the verb must be plural.

plural plural
My cats purr when I pet them.

plural plural
They are Persian cats.



- Verbs ending in -s are singular. Study the singular and plural forms of the following verbs.

Singular

(he) is

(he) does

(he) was

(he) has

(he) goes

Plural

(they) are

(they) do

(they) were

(they) have

(they) go

- The contractions *isn't*, *doesn't*, *wasn't*, and *hasn't* are singular.
- The contractions *aren't*, *don't*, *weren't*, and *haven't* are plural.
- The pronoun *I* usually takes the plural form of the verb; the pronoun *you* always takes the plural form of the verb.
- Compound subjects joined by *and* take a plural verb.

Language and geography are my favorite subjects.

Do They Agree?

Think A Identify these pronouns as singular (S) or plural (P).

- | | | |
|---------------|---------------|------------------|
| _____ 1. he | _____ 6. us | _____ 11. theirs |
| _____ 2. ours | _____ 7. I | _____ 12. it |
| _____ 3. they | _____ 8. mine | _____ 13. me |
| _____ 4. my | _____ 9. them | _____ 14. we |
| _____ 5. its | _____ 10. his | _____ 15. him |

Think B Identify these contractions as singular (S) or plural (P).

- | | |
|-----------------|------------------|
| _____ 1. don't | _____ 4. wasn't |
| _____ 2. isn't | _____ 5. doesn't |
| _____ 3. aren't | _____ 6. weren't |

Think C Would these subjects take singular (S) or plural (P) verbs?

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| _____ 1. Mom and Dad | _____ 6. you |
| _____ 2. maps | _____ 7. women |
| _____ 3. <i>Charlotte's Web</i> | _____ 8. King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella |
| _____ 4. circus | _____ 9. piano |
| _____ 5. children | _____ 10. George Washington |

Practicing with Pronouns and Agreement

Think A *Cross out the incorrect form.*

- | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. I (do, does) | 6. they (does, do) |
| 2. he (were, was) | 7. it (was, were) |
| 3. you (weren't, wasn't) | 8. you (don't, doesn't) |
| 4. she (is, are) | 9. I (has, have) |
| 5. we (hasn't, haven't) | 10. they (wasn't, weren't) |



Think C *For every verb below write a subjective case personal pronoun that would serve as a correct subject.*

Example: he doesn't

- | | | |
|------------------|------------------|----------------|
| 1. _____ don't | 5. _____ is | 9. _____ isn't |
| 2. _____ was | 6. _____ aren't | 10. _____ are |
| 3. _____ have | 7. _____ haven't | 11. _____ do |
| 4. _____ weren't | 8. _____ wasn't | 12. _____ were |