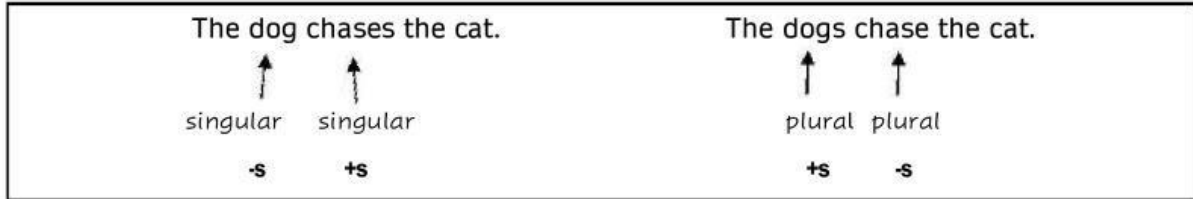


Subject-Verb Agreement

Subjects and verbs must AGREE with one another in number (singular or plural). Thus, if a subject is singular, its verb must also be singular; if a subject is plural, its verb must also be plural.

In present tenses, nouns and verbs form plurals in opposite ways:

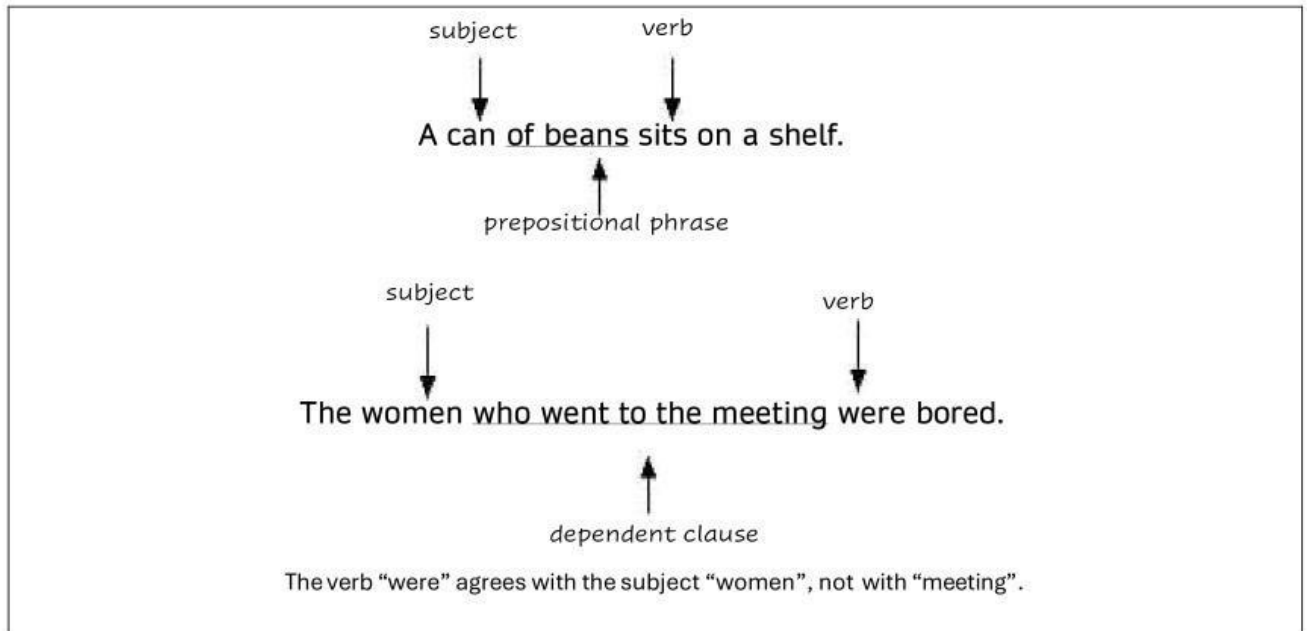
- Nouns: ADD an **s** to the singular form of the noun.
- Verbs: REMOVE an **s** from the singular form of the verb.



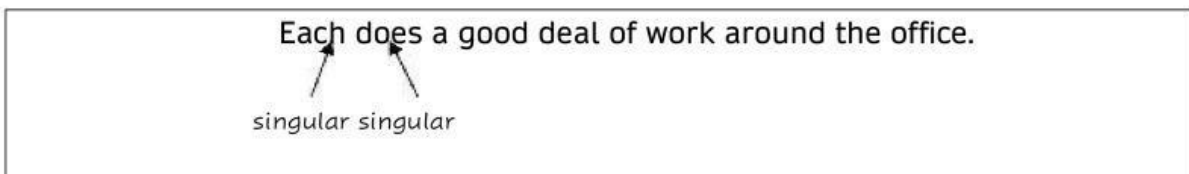
Here are five main subject-verb agreement rules:

1. A phrase or clause between subject and verb does not change the number of the subject.

Examples:



2. Indefinite pronouns as subjects: Singular indefinite pronoun subjects take singular verbs. (SINGULAR: each, either, neither, one, no one, nobody, nothing, anyone, anybody, anything, someone, somebody, something, everyone, everybody, everything)



- Plural indefinite pronoun subjects take plural verbs. (PLURAL: several, few, both, many)

Both do a good deal of work around the office.

↑ ↑
plural plural

- Some indefinite pronouns may be either singular or plural: with uncountable, use singular; with countable, use plural. (EITHER SINGULAR OR PLURAL: some, any, none, all, most)

Some of the sugar is on the floor.

↑ ↑
singular singular
Sugar is uncountable; therefore, the sentence has a singular verb.

Some of the pencils are on the floor.

↑ ↑
plural plural
Pencils are countable; therefore, the sentence has a plural verb.

3. Compound subjects joined by 'and' are always plural.

A pencil and eraser make writing easier.

↑ ↑ ↑
plural plural

4. With compound subjects joined by 'or'/'nor' the verb agrees with the subject nearer to it.

Neither the director nor the actors are following the lines.

↑ ↑ ↑
singular Plural plural

5. Inverted Subjects (in questions) must agree with the verb.

What is he doing about that?

↑ ↑
singular singular

How are the relatives taking the bad news?

↑ ↑
plural plural

Practice:

Choose the correct answer from a,b,c,or d:

1. My cousin _____ playing football.
 - a. enjoy
 - b. enjoys
 - c. enjoying
 - d. is enjoy
2. My new teacher _____ blond hair and blue eyes.
 - a. is having
 - b. have
 - c. having
 - d. has
3. My _____ usually gets up at 6 o'clock.
 - a. uncles
 - b. uncle
 - c. uncle he
 - d. uncle is
4. Mariam's best _____ often borrows her Walkman.
 - a. friend
 - b. friends
 - c. friend she
 - d. friend is
5. Both my brother and my sister _____ members in the local music club.
 - a. is
 - b. are
 - c. was
 - d. have

6. Their mother _____ in a private company.

- a. is a manager
- b. she a manager
- c. she is manager
- d. is manager

7. Neither my brother nor my sisters _____ to stay at home in the summer holiday.

- a. like
- b. likes
- c. is like
- d. are like

8. _____ a lot of errors in the student's essay.

- a. There is
- b. They are
- c. Their
- d. There are

9. Some horses _____ many races.

- a. wins
- b. win
- c. winning
- d. is winning

10. Your sister usually _____ swimming on the weekend.

- a. go
- b. going
- c. gone
- d. goes

11. My _____ usually goes to school by taxi.

- a. sister she
- b. sisters
- c. sister
- d. sister is

12. My brother usually _____ to music when he is studying.

- a. listen
- b. listens
- c. listening
- d. is listen

13. In some countries, elections _____ place every four years.

- a. take
- b. takes
- c. taking
- d. are taking it

14. My brother is an accountant. _____ works in a school.

- a. He's
- b. His
- c. He
- d. He is

15. The translation of the books _____ not accurate enough.

- a. is
- b. are
- c. were
- d. has