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Singular or plural?

1 Tick the correct sentence in each pair.

- 1 a There are several problem with this idea.
b There are several problems with this idea.
- 2 a Many charity organisations provide a great deal of help.
b Many charity organisation provides a great deal of help.

If you use a plural noun, you must use a plural verb. The verb must 'agree' with the noun:

*In my country **there are** very few **cars** that use **leaded petrol**.* (plural verb + plural noun)

*I like studying during the day but **my friend prefers** studying at night.* (singular noun + singular verb)

We use a plural noun with:

- plural verbs: *are, were, have, do, play, etc.*: **There are** a lot of **books** on the table.
 - numbers greater than one: **30 cars, 100 students**
 - *many*: *It is annoying that so **many buses drive** past because **they are** full.*
 - *the number of*: **The number of buses** on our roads **has** increased each year.
- ☆ Note that we use a plural noun but a singular verb after *the number of*.

We use a singular noun with:

- singular verbs: *is, was, has, does, plays, etc.*: **There is** only **one bedroom** in the flat.
- *alan* or *one*: *a car, one student*

☆ Note that some nouns can look plural but are singular (*news, mathematics*) and some nouns have a different form in the plural (*children, men, women, people*).

2 Correct the mistake below.

The number of woman
studying science
increased dramatically
last year.



The number of dramatically last year.

3 Underline the correct word in each sentence.

- 1 The *childs* / *children* are playing in the street.
- 2 The number of *men* / *man* studying science has decreased.
- 3 There are a lot of *persons* / *people* in my class.
- 4 I enjoyed studying mathematics a lot; I found *it* / *them* very interesting.
- 5 The news *were* / *was* very upsetting.
- 6 How many *classes* / *class* do you have today?
- 7 A *person* / *people* I really admire is my uncle.
- 8 My father *watch* / *watches* a lot of sport on TV.