

20 Singular and plural verb forms

1 Tick the correct sentence in each pair.

- 1 a Health and education are top priorities for the new government.
b Health and education is top priority for the new government.
- 2 a The number of students going on to higher education has increased.
b The number of students going on to higher education have increased.

We use a singular verb form (*is, has, makes, needs, etc.*):

- after a singular noun
*Each **team** **has** eleven players.*
***Everybody** **needs** a minimum amount of sleep per night.*
- after an uncountable noun
***Research** **shows** that people with pets are less likely to suffer from stress.*
- after the *number/percentage/proportion, etc. of*
***The proportion of** people living alone **has** increased.*

We use a plural verb form (*are, have, make, need, etc.*):

- after a plural noun
*Most **people** **recycle** less than 30% of their waste.*
***Computers** **have** become a normal part of everyday life.*
- after two or more singular or uncountable nouns considered together
***Japan and the US** **have** similar rates of literacy.*

☆ Remember that where you use more than one verb in a sentence with the same subject, they must all be in the same form:

***The project** **provides** a place for children to play safely **and keeps** them out of trouble.*

2 Correct the mistake below.

Small children loves playing with the animals.

Small children



3 Complete each sentence with the correct present form of the verb in brackets.

- 1 New technology (*allow*) us to analyse the data in seconds.
- 2 Older people often (*eat*) less and (*need*) less sleep.
- 3 Advances in medicine (*mean*) that people are living longer.
- 4 Access to clean drinking water (*be*) a basic human right.
- 5 Everyone (*receive*) a welcome pack on the first day.
- 6 Fish and meat (*be*) both sources of protein.
- 7 The number of places available (*vary*) each year.
- 8 Mobile phones (*have*) changed the way we communicate.