

# Subject Verb Agreement

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Subject must agree in Number and Person. Thus, if the subject is of the singular number, first-person, the verb must be of the singular number. If subject has plural number, third person, the verb must be of the plural number.

The basic rule of subject-verb concord is that a singular subject (the doer of an action who is being talked of in the sentence) always takes a singular verb (the action being done in the sentence) whereas a plural subject always takes a plural verb. For example:

- The girl goes out. The girls go out.

## Remember:

- Doesn't is a contraction of does not and should be used only with a singular subject.
- Two singular subjects connected by or, either/or, or neither/nor require a singular verb.
- Nouns like scissors and trousers always take plural verbs.

The subject and the verb must agree. If the subject is singular, the verb should also be singular. If the subject is plural, the verb should also be plural. The verb agrees with the subject in number and person.

- The given words look like plurals (i.e. they end in 's'). But they are, in fact, singular nouns. For these nouns, we use a singular verb.

subject	diseases	games/sports
dramatics	mumps	darts
economics	measles	cards
statistics	rickets	aerobics



- Words such as audience, congregation, crowd, group, family take a singular or plural verb, depending upon the sentence. But it is always safe to use plural verbs with these nouns.
- Nouns plural in form but singular in meaning take a plural form, For example. compasses, scissors, tongs, goggles, jeans.
- Everybody, somebody, nobody, anybody, anyone and each takes a singular verb.
- When two subjects (nouns) are joined by 'and', they require a plural verb. For example. The cow and the goat are grazing.
- We use a singular verb if two subjects (nouns) are separated by 'and' refer to the same person or thing.  
For example. Dal and rice is my grandfather's favourite. Mr Madan, my friend and philosopher, sits next to me.
- If subjects are joined by or, nor, either, neither the verb agrees with the subject.  
For example. Neither he nor his friend was there.  
Either the boy or his sisters have broken the tray. He or his friends are to be blamed.
- The title of a book, play, story or a musical composition, takes a singular verb even though they are in the plural.
- Words or phrases expressing periods of time, fractions, weights, measurements and amount of money are considered as singular and take a singular verb.
- When a plural noun comes between a singular subject and its verb, the verb agrees with the subject and not with the nearest plural.  
For example.
- Each of the watermelons is sweet.
- Each one of our group is enthusiastic.
- Neither of the men was busy.

### Semi-modal Verbs – Uses

The semi-modal verbs are: need, dare, ought, used. They are verbs that have some of the characteristics of lexical-verbs and some of the characters of modal verbs. Examples:

- Dare and need  
They are sometimes used with a to-infinitive and sometimes with a base form alone:
- Dare and need
- I daren't tell her.
- I need to look at a file on this computer.
- You need not wait for me
- Ought and used  
Ought and used do not change the form, but they are always used with a toinfinitive:
- I ought to learn more grammar.
- I used to enjoy grammar.

**Subject Verb Agreement Exercises Solved Examples the passage given below:**



**Question 1.**

Climatic change (a) ..... one of the hotly contested debates. India and Antarctica (b) ..... once the part of the same landmass. To visit Antarctica now (c) ..... to be a part of history. 90 percent of the Earth's total ice volumes (d) ..... stored there, Antarctica (e) ..... her simple ecosystem. Therefore to study the earth, Antarctica ..... the place to go. Antarctica (8) ..... devoid of any human markets. It (h) ..... no trees, buildings or billboards.

**Answer:**

- (a) is
- (b) were
- (c) is
- (d) was
- (e) has is
- (g) is
- (h) has

**Question 2.**

Keeping a pet (a) ..... the best way to fight loneliness. But clean and comfortable ..... housing for them (b) ..... essential. If they (c) ..... carnivores a high protein diet (d) ..... required. Veterinary appointments (e) ..... a must. They (f) ..... wonderful pets and (g) ..... quite affectionate. They (h) ..... you entertained for hours.

**Answer:**

- (a) is (b)
- is
- (c) are
- (d) is
- (e) are
- (f) make
- (g) are (h) keep

**Question 3.**

Today road accidents (a) ..... earned India a dubious distinction. She (b) ..... the worst road traffic accident rate. The various factors to be blamed (c) ..... drunk-driving and carelessness in the use of helmets. The total number of deaths (d) ..... now passed the 135,000 marks. Trucks and two-wheelers (e) ..... responsible earlier. Evening rush hours ) ..... the most dangerous time to be on the road. Today drunken-driving (8) ..... become a major cause for road accidents. Think today. The time for action (h) ..... now.

**Answer:**

- (a) have



- (b) has
- (c) are
- (d) has
- (e) were
- (f) are
- (f) has (h)
- is

#### Question 4.

In November 2009 sales of cars (a) ..... up. This (b) ..... the largest car boom the country (c) ..... seen in years. Today the largest growth (d) ..... seen for small cars. The entire market (e) ..... seeing steady growth. There ..... currently 1.7 million new cars (8) ..... every year but Maruti Suzuki (h) ..... not profiting from this development.

#### Answer:

- (a) went
- (b) is
- (c) has
- (d) is
- (e) is are
- (f) bought (h) is

#### Question 5.

Mohan and Shyam (a) ..... my best friends. They always (b) ..... me in my work. None of them (c) ..... football. I (d) ..... never (e) ..... them wasting their time. Neither Mohan nor Shyam (f) ..... lazy. Each one of them (g) ..... very active. All the students of my class (h) ..... Them

#### . Answer:

- (a) are
- (b) help
- (c) plays
- (d) have
- (e) seen is
- (f) is
- (h) like

#### Question 6.

Fill in the blanks with the correct verb given in the bracket:

- (a) Mathematics ..... (is/are) my favourite subject.
- (b) Politics ..... (is/are) not my cup of tea.



- (c) The poet and philosopher, Rahim ..... (has/have) died.
- (d) Mohan no less than you ..... (is/are) guilty.
- (e) This news ..... (is/are) false. Bread and butter ..... (is/are) my favourite breakfast.

**Answer:**

- (a) is (b)  
is
- (c) has
- (d) are
- (e) is (f) is

#### Question 7.

Fill in the blanks with the correct form of verb:

- (a) It is Ram who ..... to blame.
- (b) The whole class ..... absent.
- (c) The jury ..... different opinion.
- (d) Neither you nor I ..... invited.
- (e) All the boys of the class ..... absent today.
- (f) Two and two ..... four.

**Answer:**

- (a) is (b)  
is
- (c) has
- (d) am
- (e) are (f) make

#### Question 8.

Fill in the blanks with the correct form of verb:

- (a) The majority of the applicants ..... girls.
- (b) Neither of these two boys ..... scored well.
- (c) A pair of shoes ..... been stolen.
- (d) The quality of these apples ..... not good.
- (e) A black and white cow ..... grazing outside.
- (f) A black and a white cow ..... grazing outside.

(g) **Answer:**

- (a) are
- (b) has
- (c) has
- (d) is (e) is
- (f) are



**Question 9.**

Fill in the blanks with the correct form of verb:

- (a) One thousand rupees ..... a big amount for me.
- (b) If I ..... a bird, I would fly.
- (c) Each of the girls ..... received an award.
- (d) Four weeks ..... a good holiday.
- (e) My father ..... not like reading comics.
- (f) He walks as if he ..... lame.

(g) **Answer:**

- (a) is
- (b) were
- (c) has
- (d) is
- (e) does (f) were