

Subject –verb rules

# Subjects and verbs .....

- Must agree IN NUMBER
- "S" on a verb is singular!

# Rule #1

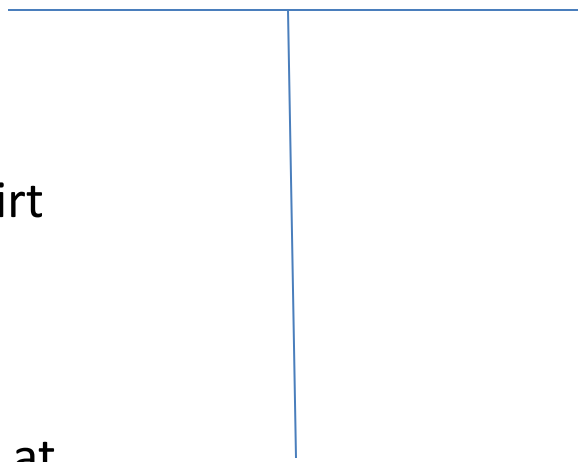
- You will never find the subject in a prepositional phrase.
- Do not mistake a word in the prepositional phrase or in an **intervening phrase** as the subject.

# Example

- The author of the stories uses a pseudonym.
- The books on that shelf are biographies.
- The dolphin, along with its trainer, is in the swimming pool.

# On YOUR warm-up Sheet

Make a column for subject and verbs.

1. Apartments in this city (is, are) expensive.
  2. A convoy of trucks (is roaring, are roaring) down the dirt road.
  3. This list of names (is used, are used) to check in contestants as they arrive.
  4. A dealer in rare books (was asked, were asked) to look at the collection of novels to ensure the authenticity.
  5. All the employees at the store (is wearing, are wearing) blue shirts and khakis.
- 

## Rule #2- Indefinite pronouns

Indefinite pronouns as subjects-there are some indefinite pronouns that are singular, plural or can be either. Know those pronouns.

# Indefinite pronouns

## Singular

anybody

anything

everyone

nobody

no one

somebody

something

Either

one

anyone

everybody

everything

nothing

someone

Each

Neither

# Indefinite pronouns

**Plural**

**Both**

**Few**

**Many**

**Several**

---

Can be either singular or plural depending on how it is used:

**All**

**Most**

**Some**

**None**

**Any**

**More**



# EXAMPLES

- **Singular-Everything** about the party was perfect.
- **Plural-Many** of our friends study Spanish.
- **Can be either**
  - All of the punch **is** gone.
  - All of the players **are** exhausted.

# 1/6/16

- 1. Not everyone (knows, know) that Johnny Cash is dead.
- 2. Nobody (has, have) won the lotto yet.
- 3. Neither of the girls (is, are) at home.
- 4. All of the shirts (is, are) on sale.
- 5. Most of the members (has, have) called in sick.
- 6. Everything in that grocery store (is, are) fresh.
- 7. Several of the apples (has, have) rotted.
- 8. Many of my cousins (is, are) coming to the family reunion.
- 9. Nothing (sleeps, sleep) as soundly as my dog.
- 10. Someone (was, were) calling my cell phone.

# Rules 1 # & 2 review- 1/16/15

1. The rain forests of the earth (occurs, occur) in places where there is much rainfall.
2. The rain forest ecosystem, to biologists, (is, are) the source of much diversity.
3. Rain forests in a tropical area (is, are) warm and humid.
4. The number of tree species (is estimated, are estimated) to be about 3,000.
5. The area around the trees (is filled, are filled) with mosses, vines, and other water-loving plants.
6. The rain forest, with complex food chains, (recycles, recycle) nutrients constantly.
7. No dead plants on the ground (is, are) left there for long.
8. Plant matter from different species (decays, decay) quickly and is reused as food.
9. Plant life, with many animal species, (keep, keeps) the rain forest teeming with noise and motion.
10. The mammals of a rain forest (includes, include) leopards, jaguars, bats, and different monkeys

11. All of the grass (is, are) brown from the drought.
12. Anybody who was there (know, knows) that Randy gave a good speech.
13. One of the contestants (was, were) late.
14. Nobody in our class (like, likes) the new movie.
15. Several of the squirrels (has, have) raided the sunflower sack.
16. Most of the class (do, does) push-ups each morning.
17. None of the mothers (like, likes) this arrangement.
18. Everything at the museum (was, were) fa

# Rule # 3

- Compound subjects
  - Compound subjects joined by “and” take a plural verb
    - Exception to the rule: Unless it refers to one thing.
  - Compound subjects joined by “or” or “nor”- look at noun closest to the verb
- **When “Many a”, “Every”, or “Each”**  
→ precedes a compound subject , the subject is singular.

# Example

- The shark and the porpoise (is, are) diving
- Neither the shark or the porpoise (is, are) diving.
- Peas and carrots (is, are) a good side dish.
- Many a writer, painter, and musician (knows, know) disappointment.

1. Plants and flowers (is, are) featured on the cover of this month's magazine.
2. The author and illustrator of the magazine (is, are) the same person.
3. Every dog and cat (is, are) required to wear a tag certifying that it has been vaccinated.
4. Neither the large universities nor the local college (was, were) accepting applications from African Americans.
5. Just laws and strict enforcement of them (was, were) needed
6. Zac or the girls (is, are) going to go crazy.
7. Red beans and rice (is, are) a great meal.
8. Neither poverty nor difficult hardship ( were, was) an issue for determined men.
9. Sara or Savannah (do, does) not like to do extra homework.
10. Either the mouse or the cats (is, are) making late night noises.

# Rule #4-Collective Nouns

- Collective Noun-names a group
  - EX. Family, class, team
- Singular-when referred to as ONE unit.
- Plural-when members of group referred to as individuals.



# Examples

- The team takes the bus.- Singular
- The team **get** regular physical exams.-Plural

## ON YOUR WARM UP SHEET:

### SUBJECT AND VERB

- The band (play, plays) school songs at halftime.
- Congress (**plan, plans**) to adjourn early this session.
- The cast ( **was, were**) each bringing a dish to the theater party.
- The committee (**tries, try**) to finish its work.
- My family (**is, are**) sick with the flu.

# Rule #5- “special nouns”

- **SINGULAR NOUNS ENDING IN –S**

- Most nouns that end in –s are plural however there are a few that end in –s but are singular.
- Singular nouns that end in “S”-mumps, measles, mathematics, politics

- **NOUNS OF AMOUNT**

- if the amount is referring to a SINGLE unit- it is singular
- If the amount is referring to several in individual units-plural

- **-Titles**

Always singular.

# Examples

- **Singular:** Mathematics **is** my favorite subject.
- **Plural:** My pants **are** muddy from the river.
- **Singular:** Politics **is** that professor's area of expertise.
- **Plural:** That candidate's politics **were** dirty during the campaign
- **Singular:** Ten **weeks is** the period of the first term.
- **Plural:** Ten **weeks are** needed to complete that research.

# On your warm-up sheet

1. Measles (is, are) no longer the dread disease it once was.
2. The six months (has dragged, have dragged) since my best friend moved.
3. Athletics (was, were) the only thing Jack wanted to pursue.
4. “The Simpsons” ( was, were) his favorite cartoon.

# Rule #6-Inverted Sentence

- INVERTED SENTENCE-a sentence in which the verb comes before the subject.
  - Questions
  - Starts with “here” or “there”
  - Starts with a prepositional phrase

# Examples: rules 6

- Inverted sentences:
  - Up the tree crawls the bear.
  - There is a bear in that tree.
  - Does the bear live in a den?

# On your warm-up sheet

1. The plains near the North Pole (is, are) very cold.
2. The temperature in these zones (is, are) usually below zero.
3. In this area (live, lives) many animals.
4. During the brief summers (grow, grows) a rare moss.
5. In the moss (nest, nests) many birds.
6. There (is, are) little rainfall during the summer.
7. (Does, Do) snow provide the needed moisture?
8. Some areas of the Arctic (is, are) drier than the world's deserts.



# Mixed Practice

1/25

- 1. Everyone these days (knows, know) that people can't really get warts by touching a toad.
- 2. The whining of the impatient customers (was, were) beginning to infuriate the tired cashier.
- 3. Why (does, do) the manager and the workers always have to start the day with an argument?
- 4. Either the casserole or the meat dish (are, is) my cousin's speciality; I forget which.
- 5. Glaring at each other in the wrestling ring (are, is) the two opponents, Abner the Animal and Khan.

# Mixed Practice

## 1/26

1. Today twenty dollars (are, is) not much to pay for a pair of shoes.
2. Several of the students in our class (has, have) come down with the flu.
3. Neither my sisters nor my brother (like, likes) cheery pie, my favorite.
4. My grandmother, along with her sisters, (attends, attend) church regularly.
5. Most of the wood (has, have) been used by the builders.
6. Everybody at the café (prepare, prepares) the food.
7. Neither of the cars (is, are) for sale.
8. The science fiction club (plan, plans) to have a meeting next month.
9. One of the girls (forgets, forget) her textbook at least once a month.
10. There by the woodshed (is, are) the hammer and the nails.
11. Athletics (is, are) an essential part of a school program.
12. A few of the items (was, were) lost.