



# NOUNS: NUMBER

## A Singular and Plural Nouns

▶ A noun is said to be **singular** (or in the singular number) if it refers to one person or thing.

▶ A noun is said to be **plural** (or in the plural number) if it refers to more than one person or thing.

The nouns *girl, doll, bus, knife, baby, photo* are singular.

The nouns *girls, dolls, buses, knives, babies, photos* are plural.

▶ Only countable nouns can have a plural form.

## B Formation of Plurals

We have the following rules to change singular nouns to plural.

1. Most of the nouns.

Add **-s**.

<i>Singular</i>	<i>Plural</i>	<i>Singular</i>	<i>Plural</i>	<i>Singular</i>	<i>Plural</i>
book	books	flower	flowers	train	trains
boy	boys	girl	girls	tree	trees
cow	cows	horse	horses	window	windows

2. Nouns *ending in a hissing sound*

Add **-es**.

(ending in **-s, -ss, -sh, -ch** and **x**)

ass	asses	bush	bushes	gas	gases
bench	benches	church	churches	glass	glasses
box	boxes	class	classes	match	matches
brush	brushes	dish	dishes	watch	watches

3. Most nouns ending in **-o**

Add **-es**.

buffalo	buffaloes	mango	mangoes	torpedo	torpedoes
hero	heroes	mosquito	mosquitoes	potato	potatoes

However, some nouns that end in **-o** form their plural in the normal way.

bamboo	bamboos	photo	photos	piano	pianos
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4. Nouns ending in *-f* and *-fe*

Change the *-f* or *-fe* into *-ves*.

Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
calf	calves	life	lives	wife	wives
half	halves	loaf	loaves	wolf	wolves
knife	knives	shelf	shelves		
leaf	leaves	thief	thieves		

However, some words ending in *-f* form their plural in the normal way.

chief	chiefs	gulf	gulfs	roof	roofs
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5. Nouns ending in a *consonant + y*

Change the *-y* into *-ies*.

army	armies	diary	diaries	lady	ladies
baby	babies	fairy	fairies	pony	ponies
city	cities	family	families	reply	replies
country	countries	fly	flies	story	stories

6. Nouns ending in a *vowel + y*

Add *-s*.

boy	boys	ray	rays	valley	valleys
donkey	donkeys	storey	storeys		

7. A few nouns form their plural by changing the *inside vowel* or *vowels* of the singular.

foot	feet	man	men	tooth	teeth
goose	geese	mouse	mice	woman	women
louse	lice	washerman	washermen		

8. Nouns consisting of several words

Add *-s* to the main word.

Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
commander-in-chief	commanders-in-chief	passer-by	passers-by
maid-servant	maid-servants	son-in-law	sons-in-law
mother-in-law	mothers-in-law		

Remember that the plural of *man-servant* is *men-servants*.

9. The plural of *ox* is *oxen* and that of *child* is *children*.

**C** *Deer, sheep, fish, dozen, score* and *hundred* have the same form in the singular as well as the plural. For example,

*Singular*

The wolf killed a **sheep**.

We need a **dozen** sheets.

The shopkeeper sold a **score** oranges.

*Plural*

The wolf killed **several sheep**.

We need **five dozen** sheets.

The shopkeeper sold **three score** oranges.



However, we do say—

• **dozens** of sheets

• **scores** of oranges

• **hundreds** of birds

In the case of *fish*, we use *fishes* also. *Fish* suggests a single variety; *fishes* suggests different varieties.

In the same way, the plural of *fruit* can be both *fruit* and *fruits*. *Fruit* suggests a single variety; *fruits* suggests different varieties:

It is good to eat **fruit** every day.

A variety of **fruits** were served at the party.

**D** *Scissors, spectacles, trousers, shorts, jeans, clothes* (stitched), *tongs* and *scales* suggest two essential parts. So these words are used in the plural form:

My **spectacles** *need* to be changed. (plural verb – need)

His **trousers** *are* dirty. (plural verb – are)

**E** *Cattle* and *people* have the appearance of a singular noun. But they are used as plural:

The **cattle** *are* grazing in the field. (plural verb – are)

The **people** *were* not impressed. (plural verb – were)

**F** *Mathematics, politics, news, measles* and *innings* look to be plural. But they are used as singular nouns:

**Mathematics** *is* my favourite subject. ] (we have used *is*, which  
The **news** *is* not true. ] is a singular verb.)

We won the match by *an* **innings** ] (The article *an* is used  
and sixty runs. ] with a singular noun.)

**G** *Furniture, scenery, advice* and *information* are always used in the singular:

This **furniture** *is* not for sale.

The **scenery** here *is* very charming.

**H** Figures and letters are made plural by adding -'s: 3 — 3's; p — p's:

Add two **4's** to three **2's**.

You don't write your **p's** well.

**I** Abstract nouns like *love, beauty* and *anger* are not countable. So they have no plural form. But some abstract nouns can have a plural form as well:

victory — victories

failure — failures

shout — shouts

decision — decisions

**J** Substances or materials like *iron, copper, wood, stone, paper* (sometimes called material nouns) are also not countable. So they are used only in the singular:

**Paper** *is* needed to print books.

**Wood** *is* used to make furniture.



**Note.** We should not say—

This house is made of *stones*. ✗

In this sentence, the word *stone* has been used as the name of a building material. So it is uncountable. But we can say—

The child was throwing **stones** in the pond.

Here, the word *stones* means *pieces of stone*.

Many other nouns that have both countable and uncountable uses have a plural form when they are countable:

The bright **lights** of the city. (countable)

**Light** travels very fast. (uncountable)

- ▶ Same form in the singular as well as the plural:  
deer, sheep, fish, dozen, hundred, aircraft
- ▶ Used in the plural form:  
scissors, spectacles, trousers, jeans, shorts, clothes, tongs, binoculars
- ▶ Singular in appearance but used as plural:  
cattle, people
- ▶ Plural in appearance but used as singular:  
Mathematics, politics, innings, news, measles
- ▶ Used as singular:  
furniture, scenery, advice, information
- ▶ Only **countable nouns** have a plural form.



KRISHNAGAR ACADEMY.

CLASS - V, SUBJECT - ENGLISH - I.

CHAPTER - NOUNS: NUMBER.

22.06.20 TOPIC - SINGULAR AND PLURAL.

Let us start our class by practicing Exercises of the same chapter.

### EXERCISE : 5.

Fill in the blanks with the correct words:

1. What \_\_\_\_\_ the latest news? (is, are)
2. The first innings \_\_\_\_\_ over. (is, are)
3. The furniture \_\_\_\_\_ in my room made of imported teak wood. (is, are)
4. My new spectacles \_\_\_\_\_ not very comfortable. (is, are)
5. Mathematics \_\_\_\_\_ constant practice (need, needs)
6. There \_\_\_\_\_ three dozen eggs in the basket. (was, were)
7. Raghav's trousers \_\_\_\_\_ very expensive (is, are)
8. There \_\_\_\_\_ no mice in the house (is, are)

### EXERCISE : 6.

1. Write the plural forms of the following words.  
(i) Mosquito (ii) Louse (iii) Echo (iv) Tooth  
(v) Roof (vi) Storey (vii) Calf (viii) City
2. Write the singular form of the following words  
(i) Mice (ii) Geese (iii) Deer (iv) Wolves  
(v) Stereos (vi) Torpedoes (vii) Passers - by  
(viii) Thieves.



Now let me share all the answers of the previous class published on 19.06.20 (SATURDAY)

### EXERCISE : 3.

1. Even these leaves will fall off in autumn.
2. The men who were involved in the accident were saved by passers-by.
3. The black sheep are grazing in the valleys.
4. His replies to my questions were correct.
5. The roofs of these houses are made of stones.
6. Mothers-in-law should love their daughters-in-law.
7. The nannies told the children stories about fairies.

### EXERCISE : 4.

1. Fly can spread diseases.
2. The knife on the shelf is new.
3. Do you know the lady and the gentleman standing outside?
4. A hero is honoured by his ~~to~~ his country.
5. A passer-by took the child to the hospital.

In the next class on 24.06.20 (WEDNESDAY) we shall be doing practice session on NOUNS AND ITS KINS AND NOUN : NUMBER.