

Subject-verb agreement is the correspondence of a verb and its subject - in person and number. A singular subject requires a singular verb. (Remember that the verb is the action word in the sentence and the subject is who or what does the action).

Examples of singular subjects and verbs:

- The boy (singular subject) reads (singular verb) many novels.
  - Don't assume that because "reads" ends in an "s" that it is plural!
- Tim (singular subject) is (singular verb) at the library.
- Expressions indicating quantity or amount are considered a singular unit.
  - Thirty dollars (singular subject) is (singular verb) the price of this shirt.
  - Ten miles (singular) is (singular) a long way to walk.
- Nouns that are plural in form but singular in meaning require a singular verb.
  - Mumps (singular meaning) is (singular) fortunately much less common of a disease today.

Examples of plural subjects and verbs:

- The boys (plural) are (plural) going to the beach tomorrow.
- Sam and his friends (plural) are (plural) flying to Florida because the drive was too long.

Agreement with compound subjects:

- Compound subjects are composed of multiple nouns or pronouns connected by the words and/or/either-or/neither-nor. Subjects connected by and almost always form a plural subject and require a plural verb.
  - Cheese and peppers (plural) are (plural) the best pizza toppings.
  - Sarah and John (plural) are planning on attending the reception.
- There is an exception to this rule, when a seemingly compound and plural subject comes to be regarded as singular through popular use.
  - Bacon and eggs (singular) is (singular) my favorite breakfast.
    - "Bacon and eggs" has become recognized as a singular breakfast choice through popular usage
- The second exception is when subjects are connected by and describe a singular person or thing.
  - The cause and solution (singular) to our problem is (singular) this.
    - The cause and solution are components of the problem (singular)

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Now that you have learned subject-verb agreement rules, determine which answer best replaces the underlined phrase in the sentence or if the sentence is correct as is.

1. The boys have to read four chapters of accounting before class tomorrow.  
A. reads  
B. no error
2. The price of the trip are six-hundred dollars per person.  
A. is  
B. no error
3. My favorite soda is the lemon and lime flavor.  
A. are  
B. no error
4. Trees are what makes the yard shady.  
A. is  
B. no error
5. Twenty minutes are too long to wait in the coffee line.  
A. is  
B. no error
6. Tom is going to the meeting at noon.  
A. are  
B. no error
7. Matt and his brother is leaving for class soon.  
A. are  
B. no error
8. Popcorn and soda is the best movie theater snacks.  
A. are  
B. no error
9. Cause and effect are a common essay format that we use in english class.  
A. is  
B. no error
10. My favorite pizza toppings are cheese and peppers.  
A. is  
B. no error

For 11-14 state whether the verb following the subject will be singular or plural.

11. Tim
12. Boys
13. Tom and Mary
14. Daniel and his friend

Circle the correct verb for 15-30.

15. Sam and Jessica (have/has) both visited the Museum of Natural History before.
16. The girls (hasn't done/haven't done) their homework yet, so they are staying in tonight.
17. It was too late by time I realized that my headphones (was/were) at home on my desk.
18. The best desserts on the menu (is/are) the chocolate lava cake and creme brule.
19. Chickenpox (are/is) preventable by getting a vaccination.
20. All of the employees, except for the one absent, (have/has) voted on a theme for the holiday party.

21. After checking online, I was pleased to see that my stocks (has/have) increased by 2%.
22. In response to all your hard work, our thanks (is/are) owed to you.
23. During the drive to Albany, there (was/were) many unique places to stop.
24. I got back to my room and my shoes (was/were) missing.
25. Neither you nor Natalie (is/are) responsible for this mistake.
26. Either you or your friends (is/are) going to have to drive John to the airport.
27. An astonishing 82% of students (is/are) planning on attending the fundraiser this weekend.
28. Nine times out of ten Stacey and Veronica (decides/decide) to go to the mall.
29. The new phone (have/has) features that (is/are) much better than the last.
30. A new pair of running sneakers (is/are) on his birthday list.

## Answer Key:

1. B
2. A
3. B
4. B
5. A
6. B
7. A
8. A
9. A
10. B
11. Singular
12. Plural
13. Plural
14. Plural
15. Have
16. Haven't Done
17. Were
18. Are
19. Is
20. Have
21. Have
22. Is
23. Were
24. Were
25. Is
26. Are
27. Are
28. Decide
29. Has - Are
30. Is