

Subject/Verb Agreement

- The subject and the verb must agree in number. A singular subject needs a singular verb; a plural subject needs a plural verb.
 - We (*subject*) are (*verb*) the best department in the company.
 - I (*subject*) am (*verb*) planning to attend the seminar on Friday.
- Ignore phrases and clauses that separate the subject from the verb.
 - The box (*subject, singular*) containing all of the missing materials was (*verb, singular*) found in Fayetteville.
 - Program managers (*subject, plural*) along with the speaker, have (*verb, plural*) to meet at the seminar.
- When two or more subjects are joined by *and*, use a plural verb. When two or more singular subjects are joined by *either, neither, or, or nor*, use a singular verb. If the subjects are of different numbers, make the verb agree with the subject nearest the verb.
 - Sally and Joe (*subject, plural*) have been hired (*verb, plural*) to work in our Finance Department.
 - Either a brochure or a catalog (*subject, singular*) is (*verb, singular*) to be selected for the test.
 - The magazines or the book (*subject, singular*) is (*verb, singular*) always on the table.
 - The book or the magazines (*subject, plural*) are (*verb, plural*) always on the table.
- Use a singular verb after *each, everyone, everybody, nobody, someone, every, one, another, and much*.
 - Every computer terminal is down.
 - Everybody was present for that videotaping.
- Use a plural verb after *both, few, many, others, and several*.
 - Both books are out of print.
 - Many were asked, but few were able to answer.
- Collective nouns: If the group is acting as one unit, use a singular verb. If the members of the group are acting separately, use a plural verb.
 - The Board of Directors (*single unit*) meets on Thursday.
 - The firm is one of the best in the field.
 - The committee members are not in agreement on the decision.
 - The staff members have responded to the upward appraisals with enthusiasm.
 - The staff has responded to the upward appraisals with enthusiasm.