

Cheat Sheet for S-V agreement

Section 1: Ignore interruptors

Sections 2: Compound subjects:

Key '20-21

≈ When 1 singular subject and 1 plural subject are joined by or/nor, make the verb agree with the closer. **Either Hank or Harry's sisters are happy.**

≈ Two subjects joined by **AND** always take a plural verb
Both Hank and Harry are happy.

≈ Two sing. subjects joined by OR/NOR take sing.
Either Hank or Harry is happy.

Section 3: Indefinite Pronouns

≈ **Each, every, either neither ones bodies=ONE**
ALWAYS singular (sing. verbs end in -s)

≈ **Both few several many=always plural**

≈ **Some all any none most=look inside the phrase**

Section 4: Other problems

trousers jeans scissors tweezers plural

Diseases are singular Amounts are singular

Measles is contagious. Six dollars is too ...

-ics Mathematics, politics, civics, economics
=singular if referred to as a CLASS

Many a, many an=always singular!

**Beware of inverted sentence order!

Off the cliff dive/dives the penguin.

Off the cliff dive/dives the penguins.

With fractions and percentages, the verb agrees with the preceding noun or clause:

One-third of this **article is** taken up with statistical analysis.

One-third of the **students have** graduate degrees.

Fifty percent of the **job is** routine.

Fifty percent of the **computers have** DVD drives.

S-V Agreement Pretest

1. Older cars often needs/need more care than new ones.
2. All children want/wants praise from their parents.
3. The train, as well as several buses, stops/stop near our house.
4. The entire shipment of books has/have been lost.
5. Mr. Raines, together with his two sons, was/were present during the bank robbery.
6. The coupons, in addition to the regular sale, lowers/lower the prices.
7. All money, including coins, is/are made at mints.

- Isolate S-V
- ignore interruptors

Compound subjects:

8. Neither low clouds nor rain stops/stop planes from landing.
9. Either the switchboard or the telephones is/are out of order.
10. Coffee and cola contains/contain caffeine.
11. Either Gretchen or Dan is/are having a party.
12. Neither the passengers nor the driver knows/know the way.
13. Both the sky and the water looks/look turquoise blue.
14. The bushes and trees needs/need pruning.

When I sing + I plural,
make verb agree with
closer

either/or w/
Sing. subj take
Sing verb

Indefinite Pronoun agreement:

15. Each of the buildings has/have a fire escape.
16. Several of the roads is/are double-lane highways.
17. Nobody feels/feel calm before a performance.
18. All of the clerks is/are taking inventory.
19. Most of the shoreline is/are sandy.
20. Either ^{one} of these seats is/are fine.

Other problems:

21. Is/Are there any more cake?
22. Where was/were they staying?
23. Doesn't/Don't it seem chilly in here?
24. Here is/are the latest results.
25. Is/Are there any bandages in the cabinet?

Choose the correct verb in each sentence below.

1. Emily and Greg (comes, come) to my house every Friday for lunch.
2. There (is, are) time to watch the movie.
3. My friends who are in the band (wants, want) me to play a musical instrument.
4. My father or my brothers (is, are) coming with me to the ball game.
5. Everyone (needs, need) time to relax.
6. That bag of oranges (looks, look) fresh.
7. The lacrosse team (hopes, hope) to win the tournament next week.
8. Your trousers (needs, need) to be cleaned.
9. Some of the books on the shelf (is, are) dusty.
10. Even though the students like the class, a few (thinks, think) that it is too complicated..

1. Mumps (is, are) not common among adults.
2. Viruses from third world countries (is, are) a major concern.
3. Most of the sand (is, are) wet from the high tide.
4. Either the two kittens or the puppy (sits, sit) in my lap while I watch television.
5. A subject of great interest (is, are) rainforests.
6. *Hansel and Gretel* (is, are) a famous children's story.
7. The team members (is, are) arguing over the defense tactics.
8. The economics of the trip (was, were) pleasing.
all the expenses
9. Why (is, are) your parents going to Africa for a vacation?
10. The mayor and the governor (hopes, hope) that the bill will soon become a law.

HANDBOOK SECTION 11 - MAKING SUBJECTS AND VERBS AGREE

Part 1: Making Subjects and Verbs Agree in Number. Under the correct verb. (3 points each)

1. The stores along the highway (has, have) large signs.
2. The outcome of these elections (is, are) uncertain.
3. Jack's photograph of the trees (is, are) the best in his collection.
4. Some boys from another neighborhood (was, were) shooting baskets.
5. The clothes in that closet (belongs, belong) to me.
6. Magazines about sports (is, are) popular.
7. The houses on that street (is, are) all Victorian.
8. Two ribs of the umbrella (was, were) broken.
9. Which girls from our class (is, are) here?
10. The surgeon, together with several assistants, (operates, operate) in this room.
11. The lamps in our yard (looks, look) like tall lanterns.
12. The history of radio (interests, interest) me.
13. Two radio stations, as well as one TV station, (broadcasts, broadcast) the game.
14. Four cartons of milk (was, were) delivered.
15. The sandwich, along with pickles and potato chips, (is, are) served in a basket.

Part 2: Using Verbs with Compound Subjects. Underline the correct verb. (2 points each)

1. Either Marta or Jane (writes, write) our editorials.
2. Neither Tim nor his ^{son}sisters (likes, like) chocolate.
3. Either the team or the coach (is, are) responsible.
4. Neither the Celtics nor the Braves (was, were) playing yesterday.
5. Both the lake and the river (are, is) unpolluted.
6. Both Jim and Fran (are, is) waiting for you.

7. Neither my parents nor Jan (was, were) in the audience.
8. Both math and science (is, are) easy for Judy.
9. Neither the car nor the stop sign (was, were) damaged.
10. Either the dog or the cats (has, have) already been vaccinated.

Part 3: Indefinite Pronouns. Underline the correct verb. (2 points each)

1. Each of the contestants (stand, stands) a good chance.
2. Everybody in our club (help, helps) with the programs.
3. Nobody in the bleachers (was, were) able to catch the baseball.
4. Neither of the girls (has, have) had the mumps.
5. One of the cones (has, have) a hole in the bottom.
6. Most of the windows (was, were) cracked.
7. Some of the punch (was, were) still left.
8. Some of the floats (was, were) cleverly decorated.
9. Most of the iceberg (was, were) hidden.
10. Either of these horses (is, are) gentle enough for you.

Part 4: Solving Agreement Problems. Underline the correct verb for each sentence. (3 points each)

1. Jackie (doesn't, don't) like Mexican food.
2. Here (is, are) the tickets for the Stevie Wonder concert.
3. There (is, are) enough problems already.
4. Melissa (doesn't, don't) know where the doughnut shop is.
5. These trains (doesn't, don't) stop at Randolph Street.

SECTION 5. AGREEMENT OF SUBJECT AND VERB

Part 1: Making the Verb and Subject Agree in Number. Choose the standard verb form from those given in parentheses. Write your answer on the blank. (3 points each)

1. The papers (was, were) blowing all over the park. 1. _____
2. The new trees in the back yard (need, needs) water every day. 2. _____
3. One of our cars (is, are) in the repair shop. 3. _____
4. There (seem, seems) to be a problem. 4. _____
5. The doctor, as well as all of the nurses, (appreciate, appreciates) your being on time. 5. _____
6. Howard, one of the group's members, (is, are) getting a new guitar. 6. _____
7. The noises from the drilling (was, were) deafening. 7. _____
8. Boots (is, are) a practical fashion. 8. _____
9. The float decorated by the ninth graders (look, looks) unfinished. 9. _____
10. Neither ^{one} of these ~~pencils~~ (has, have) an eraser. 10. _____
11. Most of the schools in town (is, are) closing for the holiday. 11. _____
12. Physics (is, are) required for entrance to some colleges. 12. _____
13. The selected passages (was, were) read aloud. 13. _____
14. Here (is, are) the news. 14. _____
15. Styx (is, are) performing in concert this weekend. 15. _____
16. Five gallons of milk (has, have) been consumed. 16. _____
17. "The Twelve Days of Christmas" (is, are) my favorite carol. 17. _____
18. Plants of every variety (are, is) all over our house. 18. _____
19. Mrs. Andrews is the only one of the speech teachers who (give, gives) final tests. 19. _____
20. The contestant who won the most prizes (was, were) asked to remain on the show. 20. _____
21. Washing pots and pans (is, are) what I dread about cleanup. 21. _____
22. Neither Phil nor Megan (has, have) driven the car. 22. _____
23. Here (is, are) your boots and umbrella. 23. _____

Name _____

Date _____

USAGE WORKSHEET
Chapter 8 **A2**

Subject and Verb Agreement

A. Making Interrupted Subjects and Verbs Agree (page 165) On the blank line, write the correct form of each verb in parentheses.

1. Some sea animals who live their lives in the water (does, do) not need any kind of skeleton. 1. _____
2. The best example of an animal that can survive with neither an inner nor an outer skeleton (is, are) the jellyfish. 2. _____
3. The body of a jellyfish (consists, consist) mostly of water. 3. _____
4. The size of these soft, jellylike creatures (varies, vary) considerably. 4. _____
5. All of them, no matter how small or how large, (is, are) designed to survive under adverse conditions. 5. _____
6. Their bodies, whether an inch across or seven feet, (contains, contain) special fibers to retain water. 6. _____
7. The water that fills their bodies (makes, make) it possible for the jellyfish to float near the surface, even in storms. 7. _____
8. The fluid in their bodies also (cushions, cushion) them against rocks. 8. _____
9. Special tissues in some jellyfish (enables, enable) them to move away from danger too. 9. _____
10. Even the hostile environment of the Arctic Ocean (provides, provide) a home for jellyfish. 10. _____

B. Making Verbs Agree with Compound Subjects (pages 167-168) On the blank line, write the correct form of each verb in parentheses.

1. Both beginners' bicycles and utility bikes (has, have) level handlebars. 1. _____
2. Drop handlebars and racing saddles (is, are) found on lightweight bikes. 2. _____
3. Neither a unicycle nor a tandem bike (is, are) appropriate for everyday use. 3. _____
4. Stability and storage space (makes, make) tricycles appealing to some adults. 4. _____
5. Each nut and bolt (needs, need) to be examined before you buy a bicycle. 5. _____
6. If either the wheel or the spokes (seems, seem) defective, be careful. 6. _____
7. Reflectors and a light (is, are) necessary if you ride your bike at night. 7. _____
8. A generator or batteries (provides, provide) power for the light. 8. _____
9. Either a rack or a basket (gives, give) you a way to carry things. 9. _____
10. Some tools for repairs and a good lock (completes, complete) your accessories. 10. _____

Subject Verb Agreement

1: The rhythm of the pounding waves _____ calming. (Clue: Make the subject and verb agree when words intervene between them.)

is are

2: All of the dogs in the neighborhood _____ barking. (Clue: Make the subject and verb agree when words intervene between them.)

were was

3: A high tax, not to mention unemployment, _____ votes. (Clue: The grammatical number of the subject does not change with the addition of expressions beginning with such words as the following: *accompanied by, along with, as well as, in addition to, including, no less than, not to mention, together with.*)

influence influences

4: My friends and my mother _____ each other. (Clue: Subjects joined by *and* are usually plural.)

like likes

5: The team and the band _____ on the field. (Clue: Subjects joined by *and* are usually plural.)

was were

6: Building a good marriage and building a good log fire _____ similar in many ways. (Clue: Subjects joined by *and* are usually plural.)

is are

7: John or Doris _____ to us regularly. (Clue: Singular subjects joined by *or, either . . . or, neither . . . nor* take a singular verb.)

write writes

8: Either Patty or Tom _____ asked to lead the meeting. (Clue: Singular subjects joined by *or, either . . . or, neither . . . nor* take a singular verb.)

was were

9: Neither Carol nor Ted _____ excluded from the meeting. (Clue: Singular subjects joined by *or, either . . . or, neither . . . nor* take a singular verb.)

is are

10: Neither the basket nor the apples _____ expensive. (Clue: If one subject is singular and one is plural, the verb agrees with the nearer subject.)

was were

11: Neither the apples nor the basket _____ expensive. (Clue: If one subject is singular and one is plural, the verb agrees with the nearer subject.)

was were

12: Either Maria or you _____ late for class. (Clue: The verb also agrees with the nearer subject in person.)

was were

13: Either you or Maria _____ late for class. (Clue: The verb also agrees with the nearer subject in person.)

was were

14: Hardest hit by the high temperatures and drought _____ the farmers. (Clue: Do not let inverted word order cause you to make a mistake in agreement.)

was were

15: Neither of them _____ going to the show. (Clue: When used as subjects, such words as *each, either, one, everybody, and anyone* regularly take singular verbs.)

like likes

16: Each of them _____ a good seat. (Clue: When used as subjects, such words as *each, either, one, everybody, and anyone* regularly take singular verbs.)

as have

Subject Verb Agreement

17: Everybody in the class _____ tickets. (Clue: When used as subjects, such words as *each*, *either*, *one*, *everybody*, and *anyone* regularly take singular verbs.)

has have

18: Every silver knife, fork, and spoon _____ to be counted. (Clue: *Every* or *each* preceding singular subjects joined by *and* calls for a singular verb.)

has have

19: Each cat and each dog _____ its own toy. (Clue: *Every* or *each* preceding singular subjects joined by *and* calls for a singular verb.)

has have

20: The committee _____ meeting today. (Clue: Collective nouns take a singular verb when they refer to the group as a unit.)

is

are

21: Ten million gallons of oil _____ a lot of oil. (Clue: Collective nouns take a singular verb when they refer to the group as a unit.)

is

are

22: The jury _____ today. (Clue: Collective nouns take a singular verb when they refer to the group as a unit.)

vote

votes

23: The number _____ very small. (Clue: Collective nouns take a singular verb when they refer to the group as a unit.)

is

are

24: A number of students _____ absent. (Clue: Collective nouns take a plural verb when they refer to individuals or parts of the group.)

was

were

25: Ten million gallons of oil _____ spilled. (Clue: Collective nouns take a plural verb when they refer to individuals or parts of the group.)

was

were

26: The majority of us _____ in favor. (Clue: Collective nouns take a plural verb when they refer to individuals or parts of the group.)

is

are

27: Statistics _____ an interesting subject. (Clue: Some nouns (such as *athletics*, *politics*, *series*, *deer*, and *sheep*) can be either singular or plural depending on meaning.)

is

are

28: Statistics _____ often misleading. (Clue: Some nouns (such as *athletics*, *politics*, *series*, *deer*, and *sheep*) can be either singular or plural depending on meaning.)

is

are

29: The sheep _____ when the gate is left open. (Clue: Some nouns (such as *athletics*, *politics*, *series*, *deer*, and *sheep*) can be either singular or plural depending on meaning.)

stray

strays

30: Sheep _____ when the gate is left open. (Clue: Some nouns (such as *athletics*, *politics*, *series*, *deer*, and *sheep*) can be either singular or plural depending on meaning.)

stray

strays

Topic 2: Subject-Verb Agreement

Directions: Certain words and phrases in this passage are underlined and numbered. The numbers refer to the questions that appear in the right-hand column. Most questions ask you to choose the answer that best expresses the idea in standard written English or in the style of the passage. If you think the original version is best, choose "NO CHANGE." In one question,

you are asked to choose the one answer that is not an acceptable replacement for the underlined part.

For each question, choose the best answer. Read the passage through once before you begin to answer the questions that accompany it. Sometimes, you will need to read several sentences beyond the numbered point in the passage to answer the question correctly.

PASSAGE

The Sheridan Opera House

Miners in Telluride, Colorado, built the Sheridan Opera House in 1913. Vaudeville and other shows were popular then. The theater, which has been restored, is home to events ranging from chamber music to variety shows. Neither a show with folk-singing bicyclists nor a children's play are unlikely there. Concerts are frequent events. Blues are just one type of music that the theater stages.

The theater also hosts acting classes and plays for young people. At a typical performance of a play, the cast often consist of children who are eight to ten years old. Everybody respond to these young-but-enthusiastic actors with thunderous applause.

1. (A) NO CHANGE
(B) being
(C) was
(D) been
2. (F) NO CHANGE
(G) were
(H) is
(J) be
3. (A) NO CHANGE
(B) is
(C) being
(D) were
4. (F) NO CHANGE
(G) consisting
(H) consisted
(J) consists
5. All of the following would be acceptable changes to the underlined portion EXCEPT:
(A) Everyone responds
(B) All respond
(C) Each member of the audience responds
(D) Many of the viewers responds

collective nouns can be sing or plural
Look for clues!

Topic 20: Subject-Verb Agreement

Choose the verb in parentheses that agrees with the subject of the sentence.

1. The team from Lima, Peru (arrives, arrive) on several flights throughout the day. *Plural*
2. In the musical *Oklahoma*, the cowmen and the farmers (is, are) friends.
3. The cast of the Broadway hit (celebrates, celebrate) the play's good reviews. *as 1 group*
4. Nearly everybody on the trip to Peru (finds, find) the hike up to Machu Picchu the most fascinating part of the experience.
5. I would guess that 75% of the visitors to our city (takes, take) at least one ride on the subway.
6. The students from the high school or their parents (plans, plan) the school picnic each year.
7. Neither strong wind nor heavy rain (stops, stop) the golfers from finishing their game.
8. I think that the Wilsons or Mr. and Mrs. Chen's daughter, Ida, (lives, live) around here.
9. Most of the artists represented at the show (invites, invite) people to visit them at their websites.
10. The town, which once boasted three hotels and an opera house, (was, were) abandoned when the copper mine shut down.
11. *Always Sing.* Many an animal in the rainforest (is, are) endangered by the planned development.
12. The Good Fork's macaroni and cheese (gets, get) ordered more than any other dish on the menu. *1 dish*
13. Historical mysteries (is, are) the topic of the award-winning author's talk tonight.
14. Although she practiced law for thirty years, politics (was, were) her true passion. *a class/subject*
15. Almost all of the village (comes, come) to the annual public meeting at the town hall.
16. (Has, Have) the leopard and the polar bear made the list of endangered species?
17. Either Vancouver or San Francisco, both of which I've visited often, (gets, get) my vote for most beautiful North American city.
18. Six inches (is, are) a lot to grow in one year.
19. These acoustics really (emphasizes, emphasize) the bass and treble.
20. There (is, are) a majority of students who buy lunch off campus.