

NOUNS: Knowing the Namers and Trouble Namers

At the end of the on-line lesson, you should be able to :

- recognize the different types of nouns
- form plurals of troublesome nouns
- use nouns in plural forms correctly in written and oral communication

NOUNS

A noun is the name of a person, place, thing, or idea. The most typical nouns are names of people, things, and substances, such as Richard, building, chocolate, and computer.

Kinds of Nouns

A noun may be concrete or abstract. **Concrete nouns** name specific objects that one can see, hear, feel, taste, or smell. On the other hand, **abstract nouns** specify concepts and qualities.

Concrete nouns:



bus



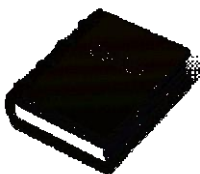
cellphone



doctor



camera



almanac



pizza

You can experience this group of nouns with your five senses: you *see* them, *hear* them, *smell* them, *taste* them, and *feel* them.

Abstract nouns: humility
 evaporation
 love
 joy
 health
 economics

Your five senses cannot detect this group of nouns. You cannot *see* them, *hear* them, *smell* them, *taste* them, or *feel* them.

Both abstract and concrete nouns are classified into count nouns and noncount nouns.

Count and Noncount Nouns

A ***count noun*** is a noun whose possible referents are thought of as separate entities. It thus has the ability

- to take a plural form

✓ employee-employees



✓ vehicle-vehicles



- to occur with distinctive determiners (such as a/an, many), and



✓ email-an email

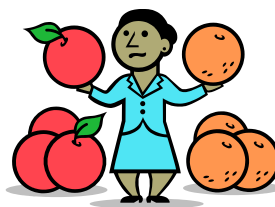


✓ dictionary-a dictionary

✓

- to occur with cardinal numerals.

✓ orange-3 oranges



✓ apple – 3 apples

Some nouns, however, have only a singular form; you cannot add a number to the front or an s to the end of these words. These are ***noncount nouns***.

air	X airs
sugar	X sugars
rice-	X 1 rice
smoke	X smokes
tea	X 2 teas

Common and Proper Nouns

Common nouns are nouns that name generalized persons, places, and things. **Proper nouns**, however, name the particular persons' places and things.

Common	Proper
document	Philippine Constitution
candy	Menthos candy
company	Nokia
organization	Couples for Christ

To view PowerPoint slides on Kinds of Nouns, click [here](#).

Collective nouns

A **collective noun** is a word that refers to a collection or group of persons or things like the following:

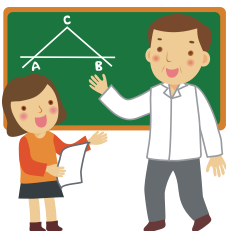
class



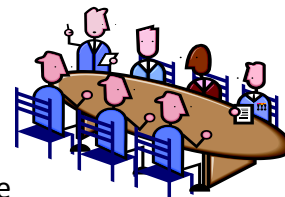
herd



faculty



committee



audience



Sometimes it is difficult to tell if the collective noun is singular or plural when it is used as a subject. If the group or collection is acting as a whole, then it is singular and needs a singular verb. If the group or collection is acting separately, then it is plural and needs a plural verb.

The class decided to go to Palawan in May this summer vacation. (the *class* acted as a whole and decided as one body)

The class debates whether to go to Palawan or Davao this summer vacation. (*class* was divided, acted separately as a debate requires).

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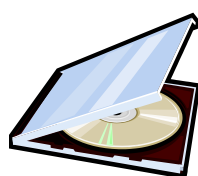
Plurals of Nouns

A singular noun is a nouns that refers to only one person, place or thing. Plural nouns name two or more. The following are the rules for forming plurals of nouns:

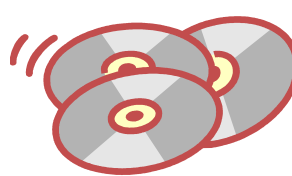
1. The plural of most nouns in English is formed by adding –s.



film – films



disk – disks





test tube – test tubes



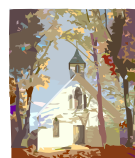
2. Nouns ending in s, x, z, ch, or sh form their plural by adding –es.



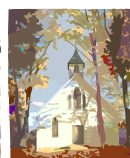
bus – buses



box – boxes



church – churches



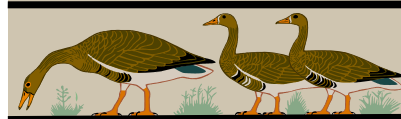
3. Irregular nouns form their plural by changing the spelling of the word.



Child – children



goose- geese



foot – feet



mouse – mice



4. Words ending in –f or –fe change their endings to –ves but some simply end in –s.

–s: beliefs, safes, proofs, oafs, roofs, chiefs, cliffs,



cuffs

–ves: calves, elves, halves, loaves, leaves

knives



Both –s and –ves: dwarfs/dwarves, hoofs/hoooves

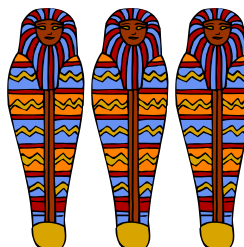
wharfs/wharves



5. Words ending in –y preceded by a consonant change –y to –ies.
 baby – babies lady – ladies



mummy – mummies



- An important exception to this rule is proper names.

Sally – Sallys Wendy – Wendys Guy – Guys

Words ending in –y preceded by a vowel simply add –s.



guy – guys



bay – bays toy – toys

- Exceptions to this rule are the following:

Words ending in -quy

Colloquy – colloquies obloquy – obloquies soliloquy – soliloquies

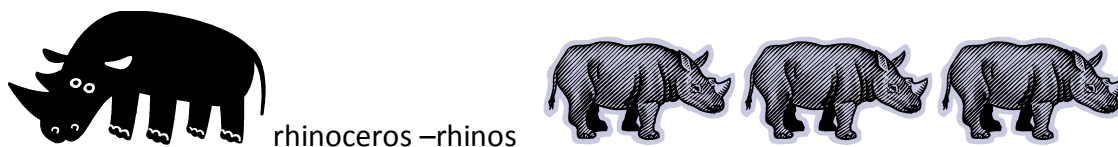
- The word 'money'
Monies (specialized) moneys(regular)

6. Words ending in -o

- simply add -s when preceded by a vowel
zoo – zoos cameo – cameos



- add -s for shortened words
hippopotamus – hippos photograph – photos



- add -s to un-English words
stiletto- stilettos Filipino – Filipinos



- add -es to many everyday words
echo - echoes tomato – tomatoes hero – heroes

Others take both forms but with preference to the ones listed below

Zeros
Volcanoes
Tobaccos
Mangoes
Halos
Commandos
Mosquitos

7. Compound nouns may be written as single words, may be hyphenated, or may appear as two words.

- Form the plural of the last words when compound nouns are written as single words

Payroll – payrolls blackboard – blackboards wallpaper – wallpapers

- Form the plural of the principal word when compound nouns are written in hyphenated or open form

Runner-up/ runners – up looker-on/lookers-on mother-in-law/mothers-in-law

Account payable – accounts payable board of directors – boards of directors

- Form the plural of the last word when the compound nouns have no principal noun at all.

Go-between/ go-betweens no-show/no-shows write-up/write-ups

Other compound nouns have both recognized forms but with preference to the ones listed below

attorneys general notaries public cupfuls



8. Form the plurals of numerals, alphabets, letters, isolated words and degrees by adding –s, -es or 's.

- Form the plurals of numerals and uppercase letters by adding –s.

2100s three As 3s and 5s

- Form the plural of isolated words by adding –s or –es depending on the need for pronunciation.

Ands, ifs, or buts ins and outs yeses or nos

- Form the plural of degrees by adding –s

Ph. D. s M.B.A.s M.D.s

- Form the plural of isolated lowercase letters and capital letters A, I, M, and U by adding –s

p's A's q's

- Form the plural of abbreviations by adding –s to the singular form.

mgr. – mgrs. yr. – yrs CPA – CPAs

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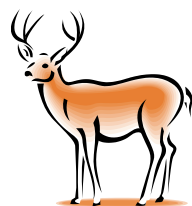
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Singular or Plural?

- Some nouns have exactly the same form in the singular and plural

Japanese	moose	odds	wheat	cod
corps	Chinese	politics	salmon	vermin



sheep

deer



- The following nouns have the same form when they are used with numbers whether they refer to one or more than one.

four thousand three score (years)
 three yoke (of oxen) five dozen (apples)

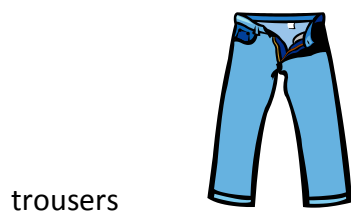
3. Some nouns that end in s are always singular.

statistics	mumps (disease)	whereabouts	economics(course)
measles(disease)	civics	mathematics	molasses
news	aeronautics		



4. Some nouns are always plural

scales (for weighing)	goods	antics	riches
thanks	grounds	tidings	wages
premises	winnings	proceeds	headquarters
assets	belongings	credentials	
statistics(facts)			



tongs



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Nouns Foreign Plurals

Some nouns borrowed from another language retain their plural form but some have accepted Americanized plural form.

Singular	Plural
alumna (feminine)	alumnae
alumnus (masculine)	alumni
basis	bases
criterion	criteria
curriculum	curricula or curriculums
datum	data
formula	formulae or formulas
memorandum	memoranda or memorandums
stimulus	stimuli
thesis	theses

Personalized Titles

Some titles may have both formal and informal forms.

Singular	Formal Plurals	Informal Plurals
Miss	the Misses Santos	the Miss Santoses
Mr.	Messrs. Lim and Go	Mr. Lim and Mr. Go
Mrs.	Mmes. Cruz and Ang	Mrs. Cruz and Mrs. Ang
Ms.	Mses. David and Garcia	Ms. David and Ms. Garcia

To view more info about irregular and foreign plurals, click [here](#).

To practice what you have learned, click [here](#).

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