

THE NOUN : NUMBER



SINGULAR NUMBER - A Noun that denotes one person or thing, is said to be in the Singular Number; as, boy, girl , cow, bird, pen.

PLURAL NUMBER - A Noun that denotes more than one person or thing, is said to be in the Plural Number ; as, boys, girls, cows, birds, pens.

HOW PLURALS ARE FORMED

1. The Plural of nouns is generally formed by adding -s to the singular; as,

boy , boys	pen , pens
girl , girls	book , books
desk , desks	cow , cows

2. But Nouns ending in -s, -sh, ch or -x form the plural by adding -es to the singular; as,

Class , classes	tax , taxes
brush , brushes	dish , dishes
branch , branches	watch , watches
kiss , kisses	box boxes
match , matches	



3. Most Nouns ending in -o also form the plural by adding -es to the singular; as,

buffalo, buffaloes	Mango, Mangoes
potato, potatoes	Cargo. Cargoes
Negro, Negroes	Echo, Echoes
Hero , Heroes	Velcano , Velcanoes

4. A few Nouns ending in -o merely add -s as,

dynamo, dynamos	photo, photos
canto, cantos	logo, logos
piano, pianos	ratio, ratios
kilo, kilos	quarto, quartos
solo, solos	commando, commandos
memento, mementos	stereo, stereos

5. Nouns ending in -y, preceded by a consonant, form their plural by changing -y into – and -i adding -es; as,

baby, babies	city, cities
army armies	pony, ponies
lady, ladies	story , stories

6. The following nouns ending in -f or -fe form their plural by changing -f or -fe into v and adding -es ; as,



thief, thieves	knife , knives
life , lives	elf , elves
loaf , loaves	wolf , wolves
half , halves	leaf , leaves
sheaf , sheaves	shelf , shelves
wife , wives	self , selves
calf , calves	

The nouns dwarf hoof scarf and wharf take either -s or -ves in the plural.

dwarfs or dwarves	hoofs or hooves
wharfs or wharves	scarfs or scarves

Other words ending in for -fe add -s as;

chief, chiefs	cliff, cliffs
gulf, gulfs	proof, proofs
safe, safes	

7. A few nouns form their plural by changing the inside vowel of the singular ; as,

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

8. There are a few nouns that form their plural by adding -en to the singular ; as



ox , oxen	child , children
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9. Some nouns have the singular and the plural alike as.

swine, sheep , deer, cod, trout , salmon aircraft, spacecraft series, species
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Examples :

1. I bought three dozen oranges.
2. Some people reach the age of three score and ten.
3. The sari cost me five thousand rupees.
4. Twenty hundredweight make one ton.

Few nouns have the singular and the plural alike ; as,

pair, dozen, score, gross, hundred, thousand, stone, hundredweight (when used after numerals).



10. Some nouns are used only in the plural.

- ✓ Names of instruments which have two parts forming a kind of pairs as bellows , scissors, tongs, pincers, spectacles.
- ✓ Names of certain articles of dress; as, trousers, drawers , breeches, jeans, tights, shorts, pyjamas.
- ✓ Certain other nouns ; as, annals, thanks, proceeds (of a sale) , tidings, environs nuptials, obsequies, assets, chattels.

11. Some nouns originally singular are now generally used in the plural ; as,

Alms, riches , eaves
Riches do many things.

12. The following nouns look plural but are in fact singular :

- Names of subjects - mathematics, physics, electronics, etc.
- The word news.
- Names of some common diseases measles, mumps, rickets.
- Names of some games – billiards, draughts.

Examples :



- Mathematics is his favourite study.
- No news is good news.
- India won by an innings and
- Measles is infectious.