

Singular & Plural Nouns

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Grammar Notes

SINGULAR & PLURAL NOUNS

A. Introduction to Nouns

A noun is a person, place, or thing. Nouns are usually the subject (before the verb) or object (after the verb) of a sentence.

- **Julia** likes **puppies**.
- **The students** are taking **a test**.

B. Proper & Common Nouns

Proper nouns are the names of people, places, or things. In English, proper nouns take a capital letter.

Common Noun	Proper Noun
a person	Ali
a pet	Fido
a city	London
a country	Brazil
a building	Eiffel Tower
a company	Coca-Cola

Common Noun	Proper Noun
an ocean	Atlantic Ocean
a river	Amazon River
a lake	Lake Baikal
a mountain	Mount Fiji
a park	Central Park
a planet	Jupiter

C. Singular Nouns

Singular means **one**. A singular common noun often has an article (*a, an, or the*) or the number *one* in front of it.

- a **truck**
- an **umbrella**
- the **bank**
- one **sandwich**

Grammar Notes cont.

D. Regular Plural Nouns

Plural means **two or more**. To form the plural of most regular nouns, add the ending *-s*. A plural common noun often has *the*, a number (*two* or *more*), or no article in front of it.

- a cat → **cats**
- an apple → **apples**
- the chair → the **chairs**
- one banana → two **bananas**

Look at the spelling patterns for regular plural nouns.
Can you think of any more nouns to add to this chart?

Rule	Singular	Plural
Add <i>-s</i> to most regular nouns.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • banana • flower • toy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • bananas • flowers • toys
If the noun ends in a consonant + <i>-y</i> , change <i>-y</i> to <i>-i</i> and add <i>-es</i> .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • candy • butterfly • puppy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • candies • butterflies • puppies
If the noun ends in <i>-s</i> , <i>-z</i> , <i>-x</i> , <i>-ch</i> , or <i>-sh</i> , add <i>-es</i> .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • kiss • box • dish 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • kisses • boxes • dishes
If the noun ends in a consonant + <i>-o</i> , add <i>-es</i> .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • potato • tomato • hero 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • potatoes • tomatoes • heroes

Grammar Notes cont.

E. Pronunciation Rules for Regular Plural Nouns

How is the plural ending -s pronounced? That depends on the final sound of the singular noun. Listen to the recording and repeat the examples.

#	Rule	Examples
1	If the noun ends with the voiceless (soft) sounds f, k, p, t, or θ , pronounce the -s ending as s .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • roofs • books • maps • cats • months
2	If the noun ends with the voiced (loud) sounds b, d, g, l, m, n, ŋ, r, ð, v, w, or any vowel sound , pronounce the -s ending as z .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cribs • beds • dogs • girls • plums • vans • songs • sisters • clothes • caves • cows • bananas • trees • plays • pianos • emus
3	If the noun ends with the voiceless sounds s, ks, j, or tʃ or the voiced sounds dʒ, ʒ, or z , pronounce the -s ending as ɪz (as a separate syllable).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • kisses • boxes • wishes • batches • bridges • garages • quizzes

Grammar Notes cont.

F. Irregular Plural Nouns

Irregular nouns don't take the -s ending to form the plural. Instead, there are various changes or no changes to these nouns.

- a goose → **geese**
- a die → **dice**
- a fish → **fish**

Look at the spelling patterns for irregular plural nouns. Can you think of any more nouns to add to this chart?

Type of Change	Pattern	Singular	Plural
Middle Vowel Change	-a → -e	• man • woman	• men • women
	-oo → -ee	• foot • tooth	• feet • teeth
Middle Vowel + Consonant Change	(various)	• person • mouse	• people • mice
Ending Added	(various)	• child • ox	• children • oxen
Ending Change	-fe / -f → -ves	• knife • half	• knives • halves
	-us → -i	• cactus • alumnus	• cacti • alumni
	-sis → -ses	• crisis • thesis	• crises • theses
	-um → -a	• bacterium • datum	• bacteria • data
No Change	—	• deer • species	• deer • species

Exercise 1

PROPER & COMMON NOUNS

Write P if the noun is a proper noun.

Write C if the noun is a common noun.

Ex. C a child

1. an orange

2. a book

3. *The Lord of the Rings*

4. Fluffy

5. Taj Mahal

6. the car

7. Starbucks

8. a bird

9. a movie

10. Pacific Ocean

11. the school

12. an elephant

13. Harvard University

14. Google

15. the bus

Exercise 2

REGULAR NOUNS

Put a check mark (✓) in the singular column if there is only one of the noun.
Put a check mark (✓) in the plural column if there are two or more of the noun.

#	Noun	Singular	Plural
Ex	the book	✓	
1	a tree		
2	shoes		
3	the park		
4	an apple		
5	the vegetables		
6	flowers		
7	a dictionary		
8	the TV		
9	a pencil		
10	an umbrella		
11	bicycles		
12	the people		
13	leaves		
14	a horse		
15	the beach		

Exercise 3

LISTENING & SPEAKING

A. Listening Practice

What sound does the -s ending make? Listen to the following words and put a check mark (✓) in the /s/, /z/, or /ɪz/ column.

#	Plural Noun	/s/	/z/	/ɪz/
1	surprises			✓
2	paths			
3	dogs			
4	placemats			
5	lids			
6	rashes			
7	watches			
8	forks			
9	lemons			
10	cups			
11	chairs			
12	businesses			

B. Speaking Practice

Listen and repeat the words in Part A.
Pay attention to your pronunciation.

Exercise 4

SPELLING & PRONUNCIATION

A. Spelling Practice

Write the plural form for the following nouns.

#	Singular Noun	Plural Noun
Ex	knife	<i>knives</i>
1	cookie	
2	cake	
3	dish	
4	leaf	
5	bridge	
6	box	
7	potato	

#	Singular Noun	Plural Noun
8	branch	
9	coat	
10	party	
11	class	
12	minute	
13	play	
14	lady	
15	month	

B. Pronunciation Practice

With a partner, read the plural nouns in Part A out loud.
Pay attention to your pronunciation.

Exercise 5

HOW MANY?

Ask your partner these questions and write his or her answers in the chart.
Can you think of more questions with "How many" to ask your partner?

#	Question	Answer
Ex	How many hours of sleep do you get?	<i>8 hours</i>
1	How many brothers and sisters do you have?	
2	How many pets do you have?	
3	How many pairs of shoes do you own?	
4	How many days a week do you study English?	
5	How many hours do you spend on social media (e.g., Facebook) in a day?	
6	How many phone calls do you make in a week?	
7	How many texts do you send in a week?	
8	How many TV shows do you watch in a week?	
9	How many movies do you watch in a month?	
10	How many books do you read in a year?	

Exercise 6

IRREGULAR NOUNS

Write the plural forms of the irregular nouns in the chart.

#	Singular	Plural
Ex	one alumnus	two <u>alumni</u>
1	one woman	two _____
2	one fish	two _____
3	one child	two _____
4	one goose	two _____
5	one man	two _____
6	one mouse	two _____
7	one die	two _____

#	Singular	Plural
8	one oasis	two _____
9	one foot	two _____
10	one wife	two _____
11	one crisis	two _____
12	one half	two _____
13	one ox	two _____
14	one species	two _____
15	one bacterium	two _____

Exercise 7

FILL IN THE BLANKS

Fill in the blanks with regular and irregular nouns from the list.
Use plural forms. Use each word only once.

Noun List:

- ~~child~~
- bus
- fish
- person
- dish
- blanket
- superhero
- calf
- baby
- sheep
- knife

Ex. They have three sons and three daughters. They have six children.

1. Baby cows are called _____.
2. It is dangerous to play with sharp _____.
3. I have to do the _____ after dinner.
4. _____ are animals that produce wool.
5. I need three strong _____ to help me carry the refrigerator upstairs.
6. My friend caught four _____ in the river.
7. Fourteen _____ were born at that hospital yesterday.
8. You have to take two _____ to get to the mall.
9. Here are some more _____ in case you get cold.
10. My brother loves Marvel Comics. He has posters of _____ all over his bedroom walls.

Exercise 8

FIND THE ERRORS

Find one error in each sentence. Write the correct sentence below it.

Ex. They found two new bird speciess on that island.

*They found two new bird **species** on that island.*

1. I saw six butterflys in the garden.

2. There are three zoos in the four citys near my house.

3. We need more knives and forks.

4. Those people are feeding the geoses.

5. There are many big oxes in the fields behind the barn.

6. I looked under the desks and saw many feets.

7. Woman usually live longer than men.

8. Have the children lost all their baby tooths?

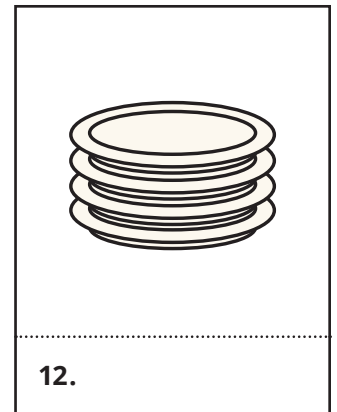
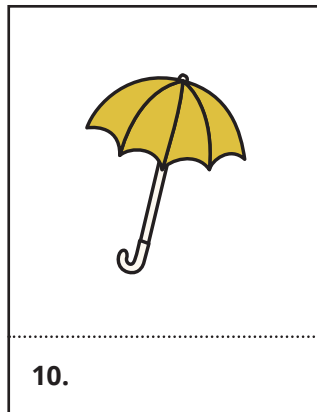
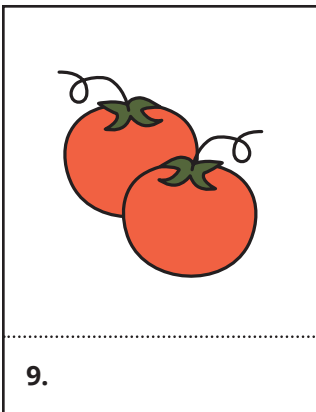
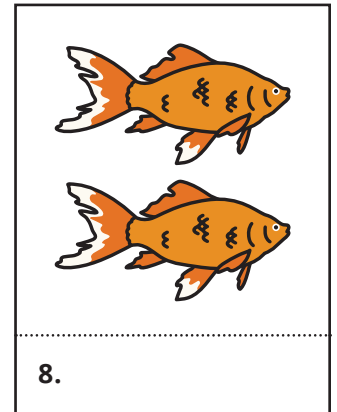
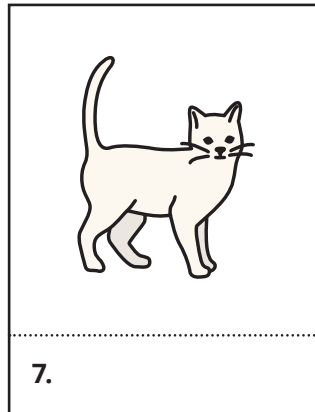
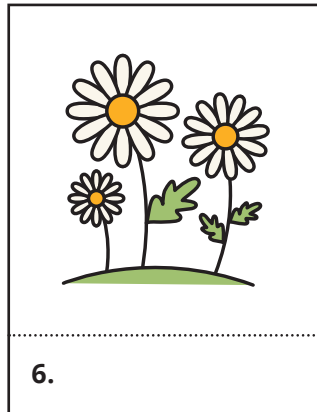
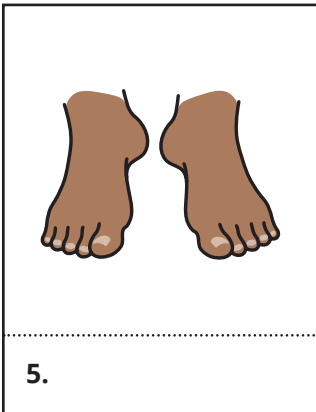
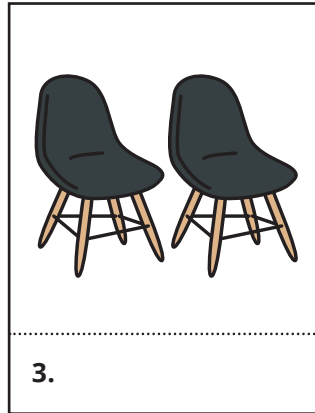
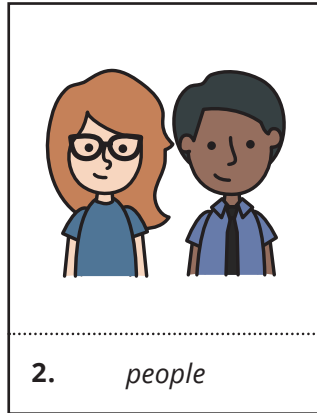
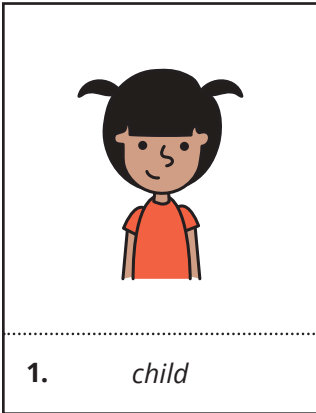
9. Would you like some more carrots or potatos?

10. I asked my son to pick up his toyes.

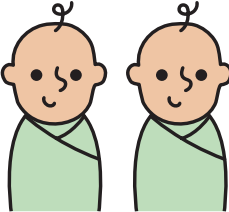
Exercise 9

PICTURE THIS!

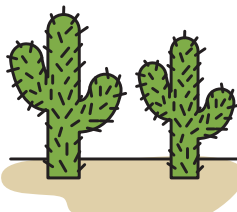
Look at the pictures. Write a singular or plural noun for each image.



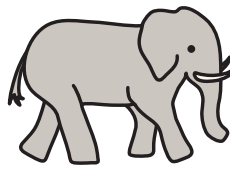
Exercise 9 cont.



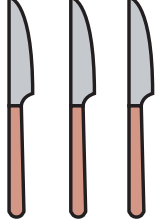
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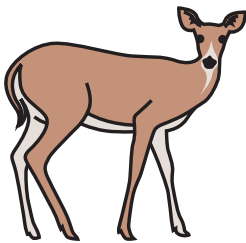
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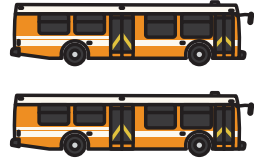
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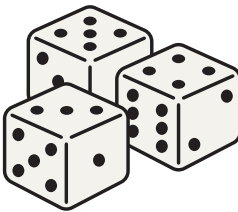
16.




17.




18.




19.



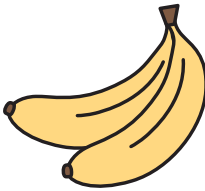
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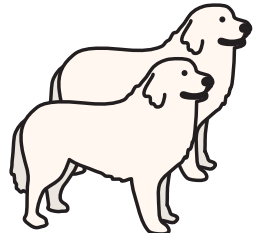
21.



22.



23.



24.

Exercise 10

QUIZ

Circle the correct answer.

- Do you want any _____ on your salad?
 - tomatoes
 - tomatos
- The children wanted to pet the _____ .
 - puppys
 - puppies
- How many English _____ did you take last week?
 - class
 - classes
- Did you see the _____ at the zoo?
 - wolves
 - wolfs
- There are two _____ in my city.
 - libraries
 - librarys
- The _____ stole a lot of jewelry.
 - thieves
 - thiefs
- How many _____ until your birthday?
 - monthes
 - months
- Three of my friends dressed up as _____ for Halloween.
 - witches
 - witchs
- She goes to the gym on _____ .
 - Fridays
 - Fridaies
- I cut the apple into two _____ .
 - halfs
 - halves
- The dentist pulled three _____ out of his mouth.
 - teeth
 - tooths
- There are a lot of _____ in this garden.
 - cactus
 - cacti

Grammar Assessment

Student / Group: _____

Date	Level	Assessed By	Target	Skill
			Singular & Plural Nouns	Grammar

Criteria	Achieved 	Achieved with Help 	Needs Improvement 
differentiates common and proper nouns			
differentiates singular and plural nouns			
pronounces regular plural nouns correctly			
forms the plural of regular and irregular nouns using the correct spelling			

Notes




Self-Assessment

SINGULAR & PLURAL NOUNS

Add check marks (✓) to show what you've learned in this lesson.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Can I...	Yes (very well) 	Yes (with help) 	Not yet 
tell the difference between common and proper nouns?			
pronounce regular plural nouns properly?			
spell regular plural nouns correctly?			
spell irregular plural nouns correctly?			

My Notes

Answer Key

LESSON DESCRIPTION:

This lesson teaches students how to form regular and irregular plural nouns. Students will review and practice spelling and pronunciation rules for plural nouns in English.

LEVEL: Beg**TIME:** 2–3 hours**TAGS:** plural, singular, nouns, plural nouns, regular, irregular, spelling, pronunciation, grammar, assessment

Exercise 1

- | | | | | |
|------|------|------|-------|-------|
| 1. C | 4. P | 7. P | 10. P | 13. P |
| 2. C | 5. P | 8. C | 11. C | 14. P |
| 3. P | 6. C | 9. C | 12. C | 15. C |

Exercise 2

- | | | |
|-------------|--------------|--------------|
| 1. singular | 6. plural | 11. plural |
| 2. plural | 7. singular | 12. plural |
| 3. singular | 8. singular | 13. plural |
| 4. singular | 9. singular | 14. singular |
| 5. plural | 10. singular | 15. singular |

Exercise 3

A. LISTENING PRACTICE

- | | | | | | |
|---------|--------|---------|---------|---------|----------|
| 1. /ɪz/ | 3. /z/ | 5. /z/ | 7. /ɪz/ | 9. /z/ | 11. /z/ |
| 2. /s/ | 4. /s/ | 6. /ɪz/ | 8. /s/ | 10. /s/ | 12. /ɪz/ |

B. SPEAKING PRACTICE

You can choose to do this exercise as a class or by calling on individual students. Alternatively, put students in pairs. Monitor your students for the correct pronunciation of the plural endings.

Exercise 4

A. SPELLING PRACTICE

- | | | |
|------------|-------------|-------------|
| 1. cookies | 6. boxes | 11. classes |
| 2. cakes | 7. potatoes | 12. minutes |
| 3. dishes | 8. branches | 13. plays |
| 4. leaves | 9. coats | 14. ladies |
| 5. bridges | 10. parties | 15. months |

B. PRONUNCIATION PRACTICE

Monitor your students for the correct pronunciation of the plural endings. The correct pronunciation is:

- | | | | | |
|---------|---------|---------|----------|---------|
| 1. /z/ | 4. /z/ | 7. /z/ | 10. /z/ | 13. /z/ |
| 2. /s/ | 5. /ɪz/ | 8. /ɪz/ | 11. /ɪz/ | 14. /z/ |
| 3. /ɪz/ | 6. /ɪz/ | 9. /s/ | 12. /s/ | 15. /s/ |

Exercise 5

Answers will vary. You may want to challenge pairs who complete the exercise quickly to think of more questions. Alternatively, have all students write five more questions for homework.

(continued on the next page...)

Answer Key cont.

Exercise 6

- | | | |
|-------------|-----------|--------------|
| 1. women | 6. mice | 11. crises |
| 2. fish | 7. dice | 12. halves |
| 3. children | 8. oases | 13. oxen |
| 4. geese | 9. feet | 14. species |
| 5. men | 10. wives | 15. bacteria |

Exercise 7

- | | |
|-----------|-----------------|
| 1. calves | 6. fish |
| 2. knives | 7. babies |
| 3. dishes | 8. buses |
| 4. Sheep | 9. blankets |
| 5. people | 10. superheroes |

Exercise 8

- I saw six **butterflies** in the garden.
- There are three zoos in the four **cities** near my house.
- We need more **knives** and forks.
- Those people are feeding the **geese**.
- There are many big **oxen** in the fields behind the barn.
- I looked under the desks and saw many **feet**.
- Women** usually live longer than men.
- Have the children lost all their baby **teeth**?
- Would you like some more carrots or **potatoes**?
- I asked my son to pick up his **toys**.

Exercise 9

Answers may vary. Have students work individually or in pairs. You could also cut up the cards and have students quiz each other.

- | | | |
|------------|-------------------|-------------|
| 1. child | 9. tomatoes | 17. deer |
| 2. people | 10. umbrella | 18. buses |
| 3. chairs | 11. mice | 19. dice |
| 4. watches | 12. dishes/plates | 20. teeth |
| 5. feet | 13. babies | 21. boxes |
| 6. flowers | 14. cacti | 22. car |
| 7. cat | 15. elephant | 23. bananas |
| 8. fish | 16. knives | 24. dogs |

Exercise 10

- | | | | | | |
|------|------|------|------|-------|-------|
| 1. a | 3. b | 5. a | 7. b | 9. a | 11. a |
| 2. b | 4. a | 6. a | 8. a | 10. b | 12. b |

Grammar Assessment

Use this tool for assessment purposes. Find alternative assessment tools that you can personalize in our Resources section.

Self-Assessment

Have your students fill out this form. Find alternative self-reflection tools that you can personalize in our Resources section.

SPELLING NOTE:

This lesson shows the American spelling of the word *Jewelry*. Most other English-speaking countries spell it this way: *Jewellery*. Make it a challenge for your students to find this word in the lesson and see if they know the alternate spelling.

EDITOR'S NOTES:

You may want to point out that there are some exceptions to the "f → ves" rule. Words that don't follow this change include *roofs* and *beliefs*. You may also wish to discuss the plural of words ending in *-o* in more detail. Here are the general rules:

- Some words ending in *-o* take the *-es* plural ending (e.g., *potatoes*, *tomatoes*, *heroes*).
- Some words ending in *-o* can take either the *-es* or *-s* plural ending (e.g., *mangoes/mangos*, *zeroes/zeros*, *volcanoes/volcanos*).
- If a word ends in *-oe*, add *-s* (e.g., *toe* → *toes*, *shoe* → *shoes*).
- If the letter before the final *-o* is a vowel, add *-s* (e.g., *patio* → *patios*, *video* → *videos*).
- If the word ending in *-o* is short for a longer word (e.g., *photograph* → *photo*, *automobile* → *auto*), add *-s* (e.g., *photos*, *autos*).