

Subject Verb Agreement

A firm grasp of the rules of subject verb agreement is essential for expressing yourself in the English language.

Understanding Subject Verb Agreement

When discussing subject verb agreement, it's helpful to remember that a singular subject takes a singular verb and a plural subject takes a plural verb. However, there are a few exceptions to this rule. For example:

- Anyone, everyone, someone, no one, and nobody always require singular verbs.
- Neither and either require singular verbs even though they seem to be referring to two separate things.
- Sums of money or periods of time require a singular verb.
- When a sentence compounds a positive and a negative subject and only one is plural, the verb should agree with the positive subject.
- Words that indicate portions of a whole, such as percent, fraction, some, all, none, and remainder require a singular verb only if the object of the preposition is singular.
- Who, that, and which are singular or plural according to the noun directly in front of them.
- Typically, you should use a plural verb with two or more subjects when they are connected by and.
- There and here are never considered to be subjects. In sentences beginning with here or there, the subject follows the verb.
- As well as and along with do not function the same as and. The phrase introduced by as well as or along with modifies the earlier word, but does not compound the subjects.
- If a sentence includes modifiers between the subject and verb, this does not affect whether the verb is singular or plural.
- Just because a word ends in –s does not automatically make it plural. Consider the word is as an example of this rule.
- A collective noun such as team or staff can be either singular or plural depending upon the rest of the sentence.

For a more detailed explanation of the rules of subject verb agreement, complete the self-guided verb study unit on the [Townson University](#) Web site.