The Nouns: Number



Look at the pictures and read the sentences:



A boy runs after a dog with a stick.



Boys run after dogs with sticks.

Notes:

- 1. The nouns boy, dog and stick stand for only one person, animal or thing. A noun standing for one person, animal or thing is said to be in the Singular Number.
- 2. The nouns boys, dogs and sticks stand for more than one person, animal or thing. A noun standing for more than one person, animal or thing is said to be in the Plural Number.

How to form plural nouns

1. Singular nouns generally make their plural by adding 's'.

Examples: balloon balloons doll dolls kite kites shoe shoes

2. Some nouns ending in a hissing sound, (i.e. ending in s, ss, sh, ch or x) add 'es'.

Examples: batch batches class classes match matches bus buses bush bushes box boxes

3. Some nouns ending in 'o', 'oo', 'eo' or 'io' add 's' only.

Examples:

(a) photo

photos

studio

studios

But some other nouns ending in 'o' add 'es'.

(b) buffalo

buffaloes

mango

mangoes

potato

potatoes

4. Some nouns ending in 'f' or 'ef' or 'fe' change to 'ves'.

Examples:

loaf

loaves

shelf

shelves

thief

thieves

knife

knives

But some other nouns (ending in 'f') add 's' only.

Examples:

dwarf

dwarfs

proof

proofs

roof

roofs

5. Some nouns ending in 'y' but having consonants before 'y' change to 'ies'.

Examples:

baby

babies

fairy

fairies

lady

ladies

story

stories

But some other nouns ending in 'y' having vowels before 'y' add 's' only.

Examples:

boy

boys

donkev

donkevs

monkey

monkeys

6. Some plural forms of nouns are totally different from their singular forms.

Examples:

child

children

woman

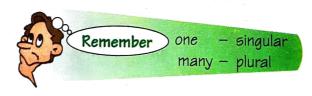
women

mouse

mice ·

OX

oxen



Exceptions:

(a) A few nouns like **deer**, **sheep** and **fish** are the same in the plural as in the singular. Some writers use the word 'fishes' when they want to indicate different kinds of fish.

Example: Four kinds of fishes are swimming in the pond.

(b) Some nouns like accommodation, scenery, advice, information, news, furniture, luggage, machinery, physics, mathematics and politics have no plurals.



- (c) Some nouns are always used in the plural. They are not used in the singular.
 - I. Names of certain articles of dress: trousers, pants, drawers, shorts. (It may be noted that the lower portion of some of these dress articles is divided into two parts.)
 - 2. Names of certain tools or articles: scissors, shears, spectacles.
- (d) Abstract nouns, material nouns and proper nouns have no plural forms.
- (e) Compound nouns generally form their plurals by adding 's' to the principal words.

passer-by

passers-by

son-in-law

sons-in-law

commander-in-chief

commanders-in-chief

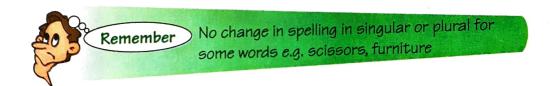
(f) Some compound nouns form double plurals:

man-servant

men-servants

woman-servant

women-servants



Countable and Uncountable Nouns

We can count the persons, as one person, two persons, three persons and so on. We can count the animals as one cat, two cats, three cats and so on. We can count various kinds of things, as one pen, two pens, three pens and so on. We, however, cannot count water and say one water or two waters, but we can count one glass of water or two glasses of water. We cannot say: "Give me one tea" or "two teas", but we can say: "Give me one cup of tea" or "two cups of tea".

Thus, the nouns that we can count are called **Countable Nouns**. The nouns that we cannot count are called **Uncountable Nouns**, and these nouns cannot be used in plural form. We can say:

- I. Two loaves of bread (not 'Two breads').
- 2. Three packets of butter (not 'Three butters').



- 3. Four bags of wheat (not 'Four wheats').
- 4. Five balls of wool (not 'Five wools').

EXERCISES



Fill in the blanks with the plural forms of the words in colour.

I. We say one card, but a pack of
2. We say one child, but a number of Mildren
3. We say one fish , but a shoal of
4. We say one glove, but a pair ofglows
5. We say one house , but a group ofhouse
6. We say one key , but a bunch ofkeys
7. We say one \mathbf{ox} , but many $\dots \mathbf{oxen}$.
8. We say one road , but several
9. We say one shoe , but a pair ofshoes
1) We say one tooth, but a set of teeth



Choose the right words from the brackets.

- I. A pack of (wolf, wolves) attacked the sick horse.
- 2. Put these (book, books) on those (shelf, shelves).
- 3. The (goose, geese) have webbed (foot, feet).
- 4. How many (prize, prizes) have you won?
- 5. He had to hire several (pony, ponies) on that (journey, journeys).
- 6. How many (toe, toes) have you on each (foot, feet)?
- 7. Which (locality, localities) is full of (fly, flies)?



- 8. I need a pair of (scissor, scissors) to cut this (cloth, clothes).
- 9. Many a (plate, plates) is broken.
- 10. A number of (camel, camels) have broken (tooth, teeth).



In the following sentences, change the nouns in colour into their plural forms and rewrite the sentences. Make other necessary changes, wherever needed:

- Keep your knives, forks and spoons ready for use.
- 2. The tiger has eaten up the sheep. The tigers have eaten up the sheep.
- 3. Can you shoot that deer on the hill-side? Can you shoot these deer on the hills-side?
- 4. A cow is standing under the cowshed.
 The cows are standing under the cowsheds.
- 5. The leaf fell from the tree.
 The leaves fell from the trees.
- 6. The nurses look after the babies.
- 7. A hen has laid an egg under the box.
 The hens have laid eggs under the boxes
- 8. What reply have you received from your uncle? What replies have you received from your uncles?
- 9. This boy along with that child plays with a toy.
 These boys along with those children play with a toys
- 10. This mouse is too clever to get into that trap.

 These mice are too clever to get into those





Change the nouns in the singular form. Make other changes as needed.

١.	Babies	suck	their	toes.		
	Baby	su	cks	huy	her	toe

2. Wolves kill sheep.

Wolf kills sheep

3. Rabbits eat up cabbages.

Rabbet eats up cabbage

4. Two dozen mangoes are needed for these functions.

A dozen mango is needed for this function

Children fly kites.

child flies kite

6. We can't see without our spectacles.

I can't see without my spectacles.

7. Those women and children have bad teeth.

This woman and would have bad tooth.

8. His eyes are as brown as berries.

His eye is as brown as a berry

9. After crossing valleys and hills the rivers reach the plains.

After crossing a valley and a hill the river reaches the They often pluck fruits from the branches of trees

10. They often pluck fruits from the branches of trees.

He after plucks fruit from the branch of a tree



Fill in 'is' or 'are' in the blanks.

- 1. That furniture of poor quality.
- 2. There no good news for you.
- 4. These scissors not very sharp.
- 5. The advice that you gave me good.
- 6. Rohan's trousers torn.
- 7. Her clothes ... we always very smart.
- 8. A sheep's feet not bent.
- 9. The sun's rays coming through the window.
- 10. Where my bunch of keys?