

CHAPTER 4 Subject–Verb Agreement



A sentence may have a single subject which is about one person, one place, or one thing. The subject must have a verb which agrees with that one person, one place, or one thing.

Disagreement of Subject and Verb

EXAMPLES: Our cat **love** the sun. cat does not agree with **love**
 The bird **fly** across the field. bird does not agree with **fly**
He **are** our neighbor. He does not agree with **are**

Agreement of Subject and Verb

EXAMPLES: Our cat **loves** the sun.
 The bird **flies** across the field.
He **is** our neighbor.



Or, a sentence may have a plural subject (more than one person, place, or thing). The plural subject must have an agreeing plural verb.

EXAMPLES: Our cats **love** the sun.
 The birds **fly** across the field.
They **are** our neighbors.

Exercise I. Beside each sentence, write *agree* if the subject and verb work together. Write *disagree* if they do not.

1. The sun rises every morning.
2. Juan play baseball on Saturday.
3. She writes beautiful letters.
4. Marta and Susan walks to school together.
5. Cloudy skies brings rain.
6. A blue jay lives in our oak tree.
7. Tulips bloom in early spring.
8. The class were on Friday.
9. Our cat chases squirrels.
10. Squirrels chases our cat, too.
11. My sister understands electricity.
12. They was home by eight o'clock.
13. The winds blows against the trees.
14. My parents is in Canada.
15. The players works hard.



Careless Mistakes Can Cause Big Problems!

Proofreading

Eliminate wordy expressions and correct the mistakes in the sentences below. Change passive verbs to active verbs if possible.

The Black Death (the bubonic plague) swept through medieval Europe in deadly waves. Though usually associated with Europe, China seems to have been its birthplace in the first century A.D. After it traveled slowly through Asia, it arrived in Eastern Europe in an extremely virulent form. During the worst of its reign, it is estimated that between two-thirds to three-quarters of the population in parts of Europe were killed. The death toll was the worst in cities since the flea which spread the plague lived on rats in densely populated city centers. Death was quick, most people died within two or three days of noticing the first symptoms. The nursery rhyme “Ring around the Rosy” dates from the plague years. The “rosy” is the fleabite, and the “ring” is the inflamed circle around it. The posies are either the black swellings near the lymph nodes, or the flowers to ward off the smell of the dead bodies brought by mourners.

Punctuation

Commas: Quotation Marks

Quotation marks are used to show a speaker's exact words. Direct quotations begin with a capital letter.

"Did you put everything away?" demanded the mother.

Her daughter answered, "Of course, like I always do."

"I don't know how many times you've said that," replied her mother.

Place periods, question marks, and exclamation marks within the direct quotation marks. Place commas inside quotation marks only when the speaker follows the quotation.

The officer yelled, "Stop!"

"I wonder," mumbled Elena, "what time it is."

He asked, "Have you seen my backpack?"

● Exercise 1.

Place quotation marks correctly, and add commas if needed.

1. Are these forms, asked Mary, current?
2. Come back! You forgot your briefcase, shouted the supervisor.
3. The stranded motorist shouted, Help! We're over here!
4. Why, groused the customer, do I have to show you my card?
5. Do you know in which direction the bank is located? asked the perplexed driver.
6. Turn around and head up Main Street, answered the traffic officer.
7. Thank you, replied the driver. I'm so confused.
8. Count them, demanded Mr. Perez. I know you will find them in order.
9. Yes, you're correct, answered a thankful clerk.
10. Wes said ridiculously Raise your hand if you are closest.
11. Do you know Ralph? the supervisor asked cautiously.
12. Let's work together he said and finish the project now.
13. Come this way directed the usher as we walked down the aisle.
14. Hello whispered the boy on the corner.
15. Mr. Paul yelled Stop that!