

Subject-verb agreement

I. Basic rules

The basic rule states that a singular subject takes a singular verb while a plural subject takes a plural verb.

- (a) They walk on the street? They **is** a plural subject → use the plural form = 'walk'!
- (b) He is a person in 'his', he says. He walks on the street? He **is** a singular subject → use the singular form = 'walks'!

II. Special cases

1. Two subjects are connected by **and**

- (a) He is a person or a thing which is different from HE → use a plural verb
- (b) The doctor and the nurse arrive
- (c) The doctor and the nurse **are** different people!

2) HE and SHE → the same → use a singular verb

- (a) The doctor and her sister arrive
- (b) George and even his two sisters **are** very intelligent. (HE **is** was not not)

3. Three subjects are connected by **or / either**

- (a) you and I → use a singular verb (I **is** is a singular subject)
- (b) you and I → use a plural verb (I **are** is a plural subject)

In some, verb depends on **HE**

- (a) You or I am wrong? (HE **is** → use 'is' not 'are')
- (b) The answer lies in the planet or in the stars? (HE **is** is 'the planet' → verb is 'is')

4. Subject is a **V-ing** phrase

- (a) When a V-ing phrase becomes a subject, use the singular verb
- (b) Finding the book was difficult for her

5. Some: When using 'to + infinitive' as a subject, we also use the singular verb. However, we don't use usually use 'it' instead.

- (a) To find the best restaurant for her → it is necessary for her to find the best