Subject-verb agreement for Grade 6

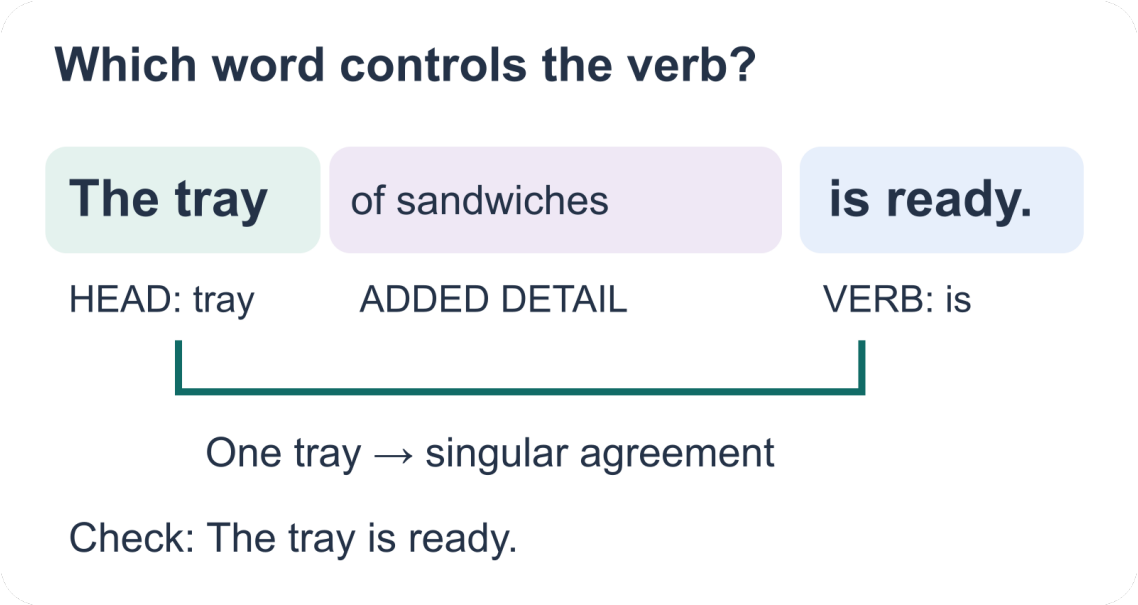
Visual learning guide - English · Grade 6 · Explain, practise, apply

Find the subject, choose the verb and explain your choice. Work through sentence diagrams, six corrections and 24 practice tasks.

Start with the key idea

Subject-verb agreement means choosing the verb form that matches the subject in number and person. In the present simple, a third-person singular subject usually takes an -s or -es verb: 'The rabbit hops.' A plural subject uses the base form: 'The rabbits hop.' I, you and the verbs be, have and do need their own checks.

1. Find the subject before choosing the verb



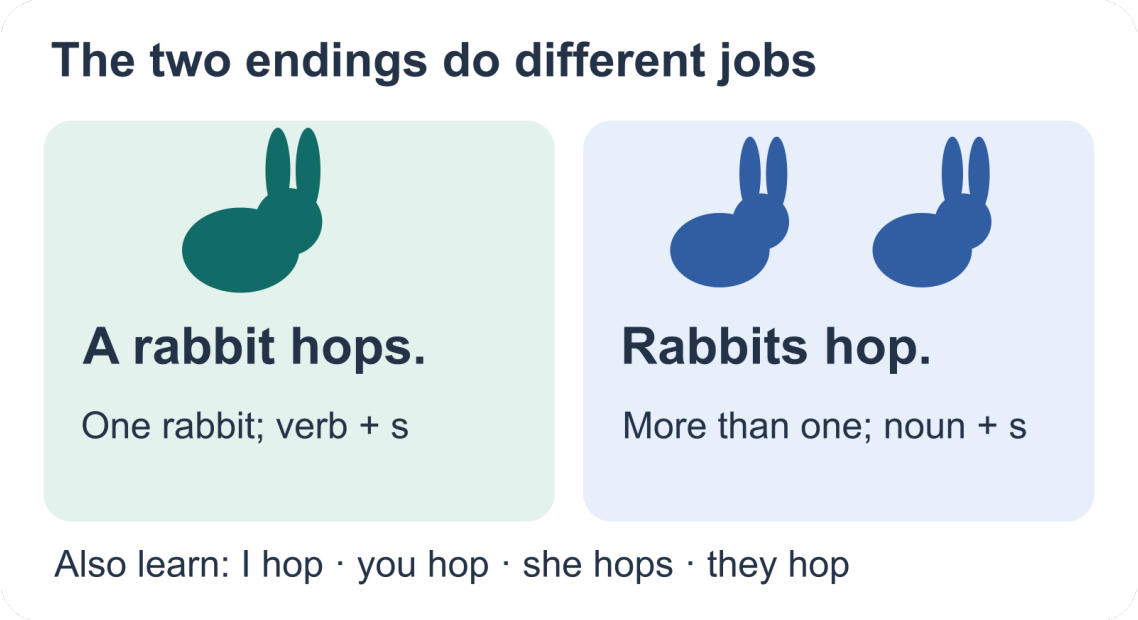
Original BananaLearn sentence model. Use the labels as well as the colours.

The subject tells us who or what the clause is about. First locate the verb, then ask who or what is doing the action or being described. In 'The tray of sandwiches is ready', the whole subject phrase is 'The tray of sandwiches'. Its head word-the word that controls agreement-is tray .

Temporarily cover the describing phrase 'of sandwiches'. 'The tray is ready' is easy to check. Put the phrase back without changing the verb. This is a checking method, not a reason to remove detail from your writing.

Now change the head word: 'The trays of food are ready.' Food stays singular, but trays is plural. The verb follows trays. The nearest noun is a clue only when it is actually the controlling subject.

2. Choose a form for the subject you found



Original BananaLearn sentence model. Use the labels as well as the colours.

Do not use 'singular means add s' as your only rule. It works for many ordinary present-simple verbs with he, she, it or one named person or thing. It does not mean 'I walks' or 'You walks'. I and you use walk.

Subject | walk | be | have | do

I | walk | am | have | do

You / we / they | walk | are | have | do

He / she / it / the rabbit | walks | is | has | does

With many verbs, add -es after endings such as -ch or -sh: watches, washes. A consonant followed by y usually changes to -ies: carry → carries. A vowel followed by y keeps the y: play → plays. These are spelling changes after you have chosen a third-person singular subject.

In 'Mina has finished', has is the helping verb that changes; finished stays the same. In 'Mina is drawing', is changes; drawing stays the same. For ordinary past-tense verbs, both 'Mina painted' and 'The children painted' use painted. The past forms of be still differ: I/he/she/it was; you/we/they were.

3. Two subjects, each person and everyone

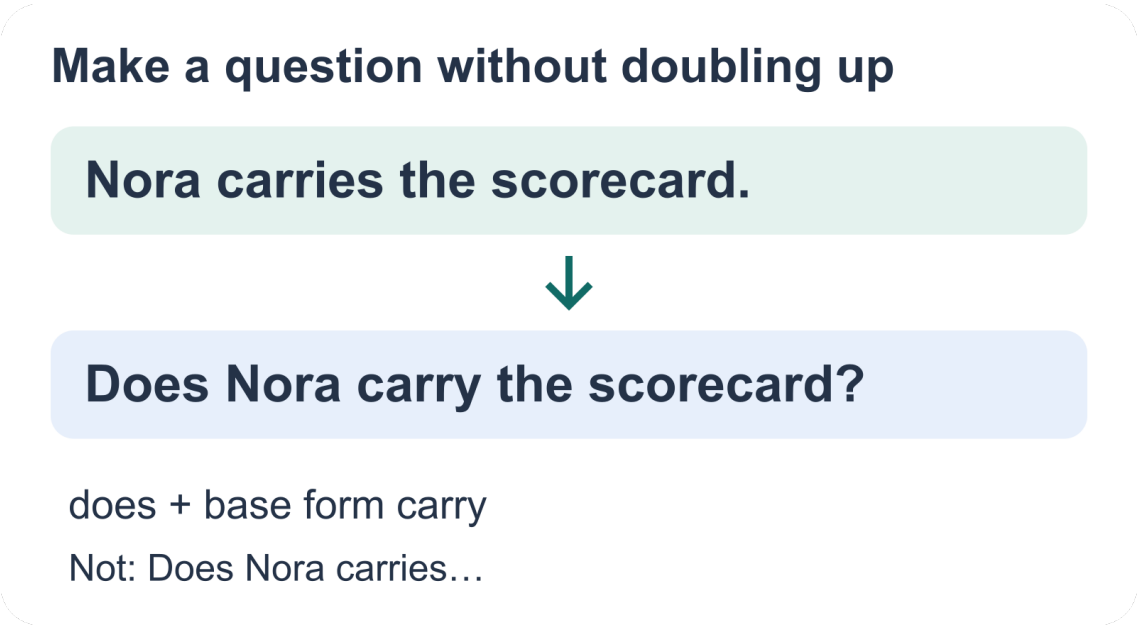
Two separate people or things joined by and normally take a plural verb: 'Ayaan and Leela prepare the display.' Replace the pair with they to check: 'They prepare.' A phrase starting with with or along with does not work like and: 'Ayaan, along with his friends, prepares the display.' Here Ayaan remains the head of the subject.

Each and every look at members individually. Write 'Each runner has a number' and 'Every runner has a number'. In 'Each of the runners has a number', the plural word runners belongs to the of-phrase; each controls has.

Everyone, somebody, nobody and someone take singular agreement in standard school writing: 'Everyone needs a pencil.' Their meaning can include many people, but their grammar is singular. Contrast this with 'All the runners have a number': runners is plural.

Extension: when and joins a single named dish or one combined idea, the meaning may support singular agreement. Do not apply this exception to two clearly separate people. In this guide's practice, the intended meaning is stated so you are not asked to guess.

4. Questions and negatives: does takes the change



Original BananaLearn sentence model. Use the labels as well as the colours.

'The robot moves' becomes 'Does the robot move?' The third-person singular form appears in does. The main verb returns to the base form move. 'Does the robot moves?' marks the same change twice.

For a negative, write 'The robot does not move' or 'The robot doesn't move'. With plural robots, use 'The robots do not move'. I and you also use do: 'I don't know' and 'Do you know?'

Be behaves differently: 'The robot is ready' becomes 'Is the robot ready?' or 'The robot is not ready.' You do not add do to those sentences. In 'Where are the robots?', the subject comes after the verb, but it still controls are.

5. Look beyond the final letter

A word ending in s is not automatically a plural subject. 'The news is surprising' and 'Mathematics is interesting' use singular agreement. Water, furniture and information are normally uncountable in these uses: 'The information is useful.' To count, use a unit such as 'Two pieces of information are useful'; pieces now controls are.

Scissors and trousers normally take plural agreement: 'These scissors are blunt.' Add a unit and check again: 'This pair of scissors is blunt.' One pair controls is. The letters at the end of scissors have not changed, but the subject construction has.

A collective noun names a group. In British English, a group can sometimes take singular or plural agreement depending on whether it is treated as a unit or as individuals. 'The team is ready' treats it as one unit. To make individual actions clear, write 'The team members are putting on their shoes'. Follow your school's convention and keep the intended meaning consistent; do not mark all plural uses of collective nouns wrong.

6. Extension: there, either/or and amounts

In 'There are four cups beside the sink', there introduces the sentence; four cups controls are. Compare 'There is one cup beside the sink'. This special pattern does not mean that every word at the start of a sentence is a false subject.

With either/or and neither/nor, use singular agreement when both alternatives are singular: 'Either the bell or the buzzer is broken.' When the alternatives differ in number, standard edited usage usually matches the nearer alternative: 'Either the bell or the lights are faulty.' Reordering can change the form: 'Either the lights or the bell is faulty.' If that sounds awkward, rewrite: 'One of these is faulty: the bell or the lights.'

When an amount is treated as one total, singular agreement can be appropriate: 'Twenty minutes is enough for this task.' When separate things are the focus, use the corresponding plural subject: 'The twenty minutes on the timer pass slowly.' Identify what the sentence means, rather than memorising that every phrase with a number is plural.

Six corrections, with the thinking shown

Read the incorrect sentence first. Name the controlling word before checking the steps.

Example 1: Correct: The basket of ribbons are beside the door.

1. Find the whole subject: the basket of ribbons. Its head word is basket.

2. Temporarily leave out of ribbons: The basket ___ beside the door.

3. One basket takes is: The basket of ribbons is beside the door.

4. Check the contrast: The ribbons in the basket are colourful. Now ribbons is the head word.

Example 2: Correct: I has a map, and my cousins has a compass.

1. There are two clauses, so check each subject separately.

2. I takes have, even though it refers to one speaker.

3. My cousins is plural and also takes have.

4. Correct sentence: I have a map, and my cousins have a compass. Compare: My cousin has a compass.

Example 3: Correct: Each of the lanterns need a new battery.

1. Each, not lanterns, controls the verb.

2. Cover of the lanterns and check: Each needs a new battery.

3. Restore the detail: Each of the lanterns needs a new battery.

4. To make lanterns the subject instead, write: The lanterns need new batteries.

Example 4: Turn 'Nora carries the scorecard' into a question.

1. Nora is a third-person singular subject, so begin with Does.

2. Use carry, the base form, after does. Do not keep carries.

3. Write: Does Nora carry the scorecard?

4. Answer with matching forms: Yes, she does. / No, she does not.

Example 5: Choose: There is / are three envelopes in the drawer.

1. There introduces the sentence; it is not the subject that determines number.

2. Find what exists: three envelopes.

3. That subject is plural, so choose are.

4. Check by rewriting: Three envelopes are in the drawer.

Example 6: Correct: This pair of boots are muddy, but those gloves is clean.

1. Check the first clause: one pair controls is; boots is inside the of-phrase.

2. Check the second clause: gloves is the plural subject and takes are.

3. Write: This pair of boots is muddy, but those gloves are clean.

4. A sentence can contain more than one agreement decision. Checking only the first verb is not enough.

A quick check before the worksheet

The packet of stickers ___ on the desk. is are Packet is the singular head word. Of stickers adds detail. The packet is on the desk.

This check runs in your browser. It does not submit a score or collect personal details.

A revision card you can use tomorrow

1. Find the finite verb: the verb that changes for person, number or tense.
2. Find its subject and controlling head word.
3. Set aside extra phrases without changing the meaning.
4. Choose the right pattern: I / you / he-she-it / we-they.
5. After does or doesn't, use the base form.
6. Check each clause separately and read the whole sentence.

Show you can transfer the idea

Describe a shelf at home in three sentences. Include one singular head word with a plural noun in a describing phrase, one plural subject, and one question with does. Underline the subject that controls each verb. A partner should be able to explain your choices without seeing this guide.

For a parent helping with practice

If your child chooses the wrong form, ask which person or thing the clause is about. If they identify the correct subject but still choose incorrectly, revisit the form table. If they can explain a worksheet answer but make the mistake in their own writing, use the three-sentence transfer task. These observations guide practice; this page is not a diagnostic test.

Questions learners often ask

Is 'I have' an exception to singular agreement?

I has its own verb pattern: I am, I have, I do, I walk. Learn those forms directly. Do not stretch the he/she/it rule to cover I or you.

Can I just choose the verb that sounds right?

Reading aloud can help, but a nearby plural word may sound persuasive even when it is not the subject. Name the controlling word and explain its number or pronoun form before using sound as a final check.

Why does the noun add s in 'rabbits hop', but the verb adds s in 'a rabbit hops'?

These endings do different jobs. In rabbits, s marks more than one rabbit. In hops, s marks a third-person singular present-simple verb. The noun ending and verb ending are not supposed to look the same.

Does agreement depend on gender in English?

In these English verb patterns, he and she both take the same form: he walks and she walks. Choose forms by person and number, not by a person's gender.

Is this an official NCERT chapter or test?

No. This is original Grade 6-level grammar teaching and practice. Schools introduce topics in different orders. Use your teacher's syllabus to decide when to study it.

What should I do if I keep making the same mistake?

Sort errors into three groups: finding the subject, remembering the verb form, or handling a special pattern. Practise two matching sentences from the relevant section, explain the choice aloud, then write one fresh sentence without looking.

Use the skill in real reading and writing

- Help a child turn an idea into a sentence
- Connect reading words with understanding meaning
- Talk about what you read together
- Explore tutoring subjects and course information

If your child needs guided English practice, ask about a 1-on-1 learning session . Share a sentence they found difficult so the discussion starts with a concrete need.

About this guide

Original explanations, examples, sentence diagrams and practice by BananaLearn. Grade 6 is a suggested learner level. This is not an official board paper, textbook extract or assessment of mastery.

Grammar-reference checks:

- Purdue OWL: subject-verb agreement
- British Council: present simple

Different English varieties can use collective nouns differently. The guide labels that variation rather than treating every alternative as an error.

Subject-verb agreement for Grade 6

Practice worksheet - English · Grade 6 · Explain, practise, apply

Name: _____ Date: _____

Show your working. Answers and explanations follow on a separate page.

For each choice, write the verb and underline the controlling subject. For editing tasks, rewrite the whole sentence. For open tasks, compare the rule rather than copying the sample wording. Try a group of six before revealing the explanations.

1. The puppy near the shoes ___ asleep. Choose is or are.

2. The puppies near the shoe rack ___ asleep. Choose is or are.

3. My sister ___ kites on Sundays. Choose makes or make.

4. I ___ the first clue. Choose has or have.

5. You ___ in the right queue. Choose is or are.

6. The sound of the drums ___ louder now. Choose seems or seem.

7. Ria and her cousin ___ the library together. Choose visits or visit.

8. Every seat in these buses ___ a number. Choose has or have.

9. Someone ___ knocking at the gate. Choose is or are.

10. These scissors ___ safely in their case. Choose belongs or belong.

11. The information on both cards ___ identical. Choose is or are.

12. There ___ a spare helmet in the cupboard. Choose is or are.

13. Correct only the agreement error: My cousins does not need a lift.

14. Correct: Does the bus stops outside the museum?

15. Correct: The captain, along with two players, are checking the net.

16. Keep or correct: The news about the new park is exciting.

17. Correct: Each of the answers have a reason.

18. Correct: The child was excited, and the visitors was curious.

19. Write both forms: The list of activities ___ short. The activities on the list ___ varied. Use is or are.

20. Change to a question: The gardener waters the seedlings.

21. Choose and explain: Either the gate or the doors ___ open. Use is or are.

22. A coach treats the team as one unit. Complete: Our team ___ ready. Then rewrite using team members.

23. Write one sentence whose subject is 'the packet of seeds', then another whose subject is 'the seeds'. Use is or are.

24. Edit both errors: The guide to the caves have a map. Does it shows the entrance?

Answers and explanations

Answer key - English · Grade 6 · Explain, practise, apply

Subject-verb agreement for Grade 6

1. is

Puppy is singular. Shoes is part of the phrase near the shoes and does not control the verb.

2. are

Puppies is plural. The singular phrase shoe rack does not change that.

3. makes

My sister is third-person singular. In this present-simple sentence, make becomes makes.

4. have

I uses have. A subject referring to one person does not always take has.

5. are

You takes are whether it refers to one person or more than one.

6. seems

Sound is the singular head word. Drums belongs to the describing phrase.

7. visit

Two separate people joined by and form a plural subject. They visit.

8. has

Every seat is singular. In these buses gives location; it does not control agreement.

9. is

Someone takes singular agreement. Is is the finite helping verb; knocking does not change.

10. belong

Scissors takes plural agreement here. The present-simple base form is belong.

11. is

Information is uncountable in this use and takes is. Both cards is not the controlling subject.

12. is

A spare helmet is singular. Rewrite as A spare helmet is in the cupboard to check.

13. My cousins do not need a lift.

Cousins is plural, so change does to do. Need stays in its base form.

14. Does the bus stop outside the museum?

Does already carries the third-person singular form. The main verb must be stop.

15. The captain, along with two players, is checking the net.

Along with adds information; it does not join two subjects in the way and does. Captain controls is.

16. Keep the sentence as written.

News takes singular agreement despite its final s. Is is correct.

17. Each of the answers has a reason.

Each is singular. Answers occurs inside the of-phrase.

18. The child was excited, and the visitors were curious.

Child takes was. Visitors is plural and takes were. Unlike most ordinary past verbs, be changes form.

19. is; are

List controls the first verb. Activities controls the second. The same nouns can play different roles in different sentences.

20. Does the gardener water the seedlings?

Gardener is third-person singular, so use does followed by the base form water.

21. are

In this mixed-number either/or construction, the nearer alternative doors is plural. Reversing the alternatives would give Either the doors or the gate is open.

22. Our team is ready. Our team members are ready.

The stated unit meaning supports singular is. In the rewrite, members is explicitly plural and takes are.

23. Example: The packet of seeds is dry. The seeds are tiny.

Other sensible sentences are possible. Check that packet takes is and seeds takes are, and that both sentences make sense.

24. The guide to the caves has a map. Does it show the entrance?

Guide is singular and takes has. Does is followed by the base verb show. Caves does not control the first verb.