

11. FUNCTIONAL GRAMMAR

A verb must agree with its subject in number and person i.e., the verb should be of the same number and person as that of the subject.

1. Two or more singular subjects joined by 'and' take a plural verb.
Eg: Mohan and Sohan have passed.
2. But some times two subjects are regarded as presenting one idea and than the verb is singular as
Eg: Bread and butter is a wholesome food.
Slow and steady wins the race.
3. If two singular nouns refer to the same person or thing, the verb must be singular;
as
Eg: The orator and states man has arrived (here orator and statesman refer to the same person).
4. If the article is mentioned twice then two distinct persons are intended and the verb following must be in plural number; as.
Eg: The poet and the philosopher are dead.
5. If two singular nouns joined by and preceded by each and every, the verb is singular; as
Eg: Each day and every hour brings us a fresh anxiety.
6. Two or more subjects connected by or, nor, either....or, neither....nor take singular verb; as
Eg: Neither Rama nor his brother was present.
Either Mohan or Sohan is in the wrong. Any boy or girl sees it at once.
7. When one of the nouns or pronouns joined by or, nor is the singular and the other in plural, the verb should be plural and the plural subject be placed near the verb;
as
Eg: John or his brothers are to blame.
Neither Afzal nor his friends were present
8. If two subjects joined by or, nor are different persons, the verb agrees in person with the subject nearer to it; as
Eg: Either you or he is telling a lie.
9. If two nouns are joined with or as well as, the verb, the verb agrees with the first noun, i.e., if the first noun is singular the verb must be singular,

even if the second noun is plural; as

Eg: Rama as well as his friend has won the prize.

Iron as well as gold is found in India.

The king with his ministers was
killed.

The manager as well as the workers is responsible for the accident.

10. Collective noun is a word that refers to a group of collections of persons or things.

Collective noun takes a singular or plural verb according to the sense. If the idea collection are thought of, the verb must be plural.

Eg: The Jury = men of jury were divided in their opinions. The jury (= one body) has elected its president.

11. Indefinite pronouns: Pronouns, which do not refer to a particular person or thing, take a singular verb. Some of the commonly used pronouns are: either, neither, everyone, many must be followed by a verb in singular; as

Eg: Either of the two applicants is suitable.

Neither of the applicants is
suitable. Each one of these men is
reliable.

Every one of the boat's crew was
drowned. Many a flower is born to blush
unseen.

12. Errors due to proximity should be avoided. Often verb is made to agree in number with a noun near instead of the proper subject. This should be avoided.

Eg: The behavior of the children was excellent.

Not one of his lectures has ever been
printed. The cost of all these items has been
raised.

13. When the plural noun denotes some specific quantity or amount considered as a whole, the verb is generally singular.

Eg: A thousand rupees is a good sum

Two thirds of the city is in ruins.

14. It is the same with names of books and names of sciences.

Eg: Arabian Nights is an interesting book.

Mathematics is his favorite subject.

15. Relative pronouns; a relative pronoun always agrees in number and person with its antecedent; as

Eg: I am a woman who seeks my children's welfare.

He is one of those men who know every thing.

16. Words that indicate part or portion: most often such words that indicate part or portion occur as part of a phrase, which acts as the subject. The complete subject determines the number of the verb in such cases.

Eg: Half of the job was completed within two days.

Half of the jobs were completed within two days.

Two thirds of the employees are in favour of this proposal. Two thirds of the pole is rotten.

All the money is spent.

All the students have gone.

18. Words that indicate numbers: When number is preceded by 'the', it takes as singular Verb and by 'a'. a plural verb. This is because 'the' number is generally considered to refer to a unit and 'a' number to individual terms of a unit.

Eg: The number of people who reported for the work this morning is small.

The number of crimes in Delhi is increasing.

A number of meetings were held to discuss the issue. A number of books are missing from the library.

19. Words that indicate amount and people. These words generally take a singular verb

Eg: Ten thousand rupees is a lot of money.

Three miles a day is a good walk.

But when such word is used to convey a general impression, it takes a plural verb.

20. Introductory 'there' and 'it' : In sentences beginning with 'there', the true subject which generally follows the verb, determines the number of verb.

Eg: There are various methods of collecting data.

There is no need for typing this report.

'It' always takes a singular verb, irrespective of whether the subject, which usually follows the verb, is singular or plural.

Eg: It is the people who matter in a democracy. It is the same draft which you showed me yesterday, isn't it?