5. **Singular and Plural Nouns**

**Count Nouns:** Most nouns name something you can count; for example, if you buy a bag of peanuts, you can count each peanut in the bag—*one peanut, two peanuts, three peanuts*, and so on. We call nouns like *peanut* count nouns, and usually we add an -s ending to show more than one.

Singular count nouns refer to one person or thing while plural count nouns refer to more than one person or thing. We have several ways of making count nouns plural.

**Some Rules for Forming Plurals:**

1. To make a count noun plural, you can often just add an -s ending:

   - book → books
   - movie → movies
   - horse → horses
   - student → students

2. Most count nouns ending in *o, s, sh, ch*, and *x* add -es to form plurals:

   - potato → potatoes
   - class → classes
   - box → boxes
   - church → churches
   - dish → dishes

3. Many count nouns ending in a consonant followed by *y* change the *y* to *i* and add -es to form plurals:

   - company → companies
   - baby → babies
   - library → libraries
   - family → families

4. Still other count nouns change form rather than just the ending:

   - man → men
   - child → children
   - woman → women
   - wife → wives

To be sure that you are using the correct plural form, consult this list or a dictionary.
Exercise 1

Complete the following sentences, making any underlined singular nouns plural. Notice that modifiers like many, most, and two, signal the plural form of count nouns.

Example: The student studied for the history midterm.

Many students studied for the history midterm.

1. I watched a film while I was sick.
   I watched several ____________ while I was sick.

2. The library has a collection of rare books.
   Most __________ have ________________ of rare books.

3. The photographer took shots of a wolf traveling in a pack.
   A team of __________ took shots of __________ traveling in __________.

4. The woman ran a daycare center.
   The three __________ ran a daycare center together.

5. I wrote an essay for my history class.
   I wrote many __________ for my history class.

6. Maria ate a stuffed tomato for dinner.
   Maria ate two stuffed __________ for dinner.

Notice that the articles a and an and the are all used before singular nouns--a society, a wolf, an essay, the woman. But only the article the can be used before plural nouns.

The article a is used before words beginning with a consonant sound:

   a dog  a university  a car  a house

The article an is used before words beginning with a vowel sound:

   an octopus  an old man  an umbrella  an awful movie
**Non-Count Nouns**: Some nouns name things you cannot count. things you can only measure. For example, if you buy a pound of peanut butter, you can't count the peanut butter; you can only measure it in weight or quantity, like ounces or cups. We call words like *peanut butter* **non-count nouns** and we do not add -s endings to the noun, no matter how much of it we are referring to. As subjects of verbs, non-count nouns are just like singular nouns, so in the present tense, their verbs have -s endings.

The following is a list of commonly-used nouns which are almost always non-count:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Admiration</th>
<th>Foolishness</th>
<th>Luck</th>
<th>Propaganda</th>
<th>Psychiatry</th>
<th>Psychology</th>
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<td>Machinery</td>
<td>Rain</td>
<td>Recreation</td>
<td>Relaxation</td>
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<td>Momentum</td>
<td>Rice</td>
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<td>Money</td>
<td>Oxygen</td>
<td>Scenery</td>
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<td>Participation</td>
<td>Significance</td>
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<td>Isolation</td>
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<td>Equipment</td>
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<td>Literature</td>
<td>Objectivity</td>
<td>Progress</td>
<td>Violence</td>
<td>Work</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Non-count nouns do not have plural -s endings and cannot be used with a or an; they can be used with the. For example, we can say:

*The advice* he gave me was helpful.
He gave me *some good advice.*
I asked him for *advice.*

**but not:**

The *adventures* he gave me were helpful.
Please don't give me *an advice.*
Exercise 2

Here is a list of a few of the nouns that are always non-count. Use each in a sentence. Do not add -s endings to non-count nouns.

Example: homework  
My homework takes a lot of time.

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
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<td>2.</td>
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<td>4.</td>
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<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>work</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Special Pattern #1: The following one-word modifiers modify singular count nouns. When they come in front of nouns, the nouns do not have plural -s endings.

- another
- one
- every
- each
- either
- neither

- Henry ordered another hamburger.
- She owns one car.
- Every student in the class is a freshman.
- The teacher learned the name of each child.
- You can choose either movie to watch.
- Neither boy brought his book to class.

Special Pattern #2:

- one of 2 or more
- every one of 2 or more
- each of 2 or more
- either of 2 or more
- neither of 2 or more

Examples:
- One of my sisters lives in Texas.
- Every one of my friends is coming to the party.
- Each of my aunts has two children.
- Either of the two books is worth reading.
- Neither of the two films sounds worthwhile to me.

In Pattern #2, the nouns following of have -s endings because they refer to more than one--two or more sisters, several friends, two or more aunts, two books, and two films.

Notice the important difference between Pattern #1 and Pattern #2:

#1: If the single word another, one, every, each, either, or neither comes before the count noun, the noun is singular and does not have an -s ending.

#2: If the words one of, every one of, each of, either of, or neither of come before a count noun, the noun is plural and must have an -s ending.

An important sign of the difference is the word of.
Exercise 3

In the following sentences, correct any plural-s ending errors that you find. Watch for Special Pattern #1 and Special Pattern #2 discussed on the previous page.

Examples:
incorrect: Every students got an A in the midterm.
correct: Every student got an A in the midterm.
incorrect: One of my aunt owns a Fiat.
correct: One of my aunts owns a Fiat.

1. One of my favorite movie is on television tonight.
2. Lois likes to dance with one of her old boyfriend.
3. Each students needs to do his part of the research project.
4. Each of the student is writing about an aspect of urban pollution.
5. Every one of my relative is coming to the family reunion.
6. Julie wants to buy another cars.
7. Neither of her old car runs any more.
8. You can choose either of the dessert.
9. You should wear one of your new shirt.
10. Every freshmen has to adjust to a new campus.
11. Every one of Jane's novel gets published.
12. I spent two hours cleaning each rooms.
Exercise 4

In the following exercise, you will practice the patterns we've covered so far. Correct any plural-s ending errors that you find. Add -s endings to count nouns that should be plural, and cross out -s endings on singular count nouns or non-count nouns.

Incorrect: Many student in the class were doing their homeworks.
Correct: Many students in the class were doing their homework.

1. University student usually work part-time.

2. Every teachers gave a lot of test last semester.

3. Adolescence is one of the most important period in our Jives.

4. I enjoy many kind of entertainments.

5. I found a lot of informations about social problem in the library.

6. Maria has several pet--one dog, three birds and four hamster--and she takes good cares of each ones.

7. Both country have large population.

8. Carl needs new furnitures for his living room, but he doesn't want to spend a lot of money on more junks.

9. Student should evaluate their teachers because students are the one who know if their teacher are effective.

10. Most of my neighbor paved their driveway with stones.
11. One of my oldest friends arrives on Friday, and every time he comes, I'm happy to see him.

12. It's fun to do researches with another students.

13. Each computers is working, but we can't find the softwares we need.

14. Neither of my brother has a job, so they have to do all the houseworks.

Exercise 5

Correct the plural -s ending errors in the following paragraph. Add -s endings to some nouns that should be plural, and cross out -s endings on nouns that should be singular or non-count.

Some educators believe that reducing class size is just one small step toward improving elementary education while other believe that there is no evidences to show that reducing class size will improve students' performance. Some teachers feel that, with fewer student, they will be able to give more individual attentions to student who need help with homeworks and more individual help in laboratory classes like biology and chemistry. School administrator hope that the class-size reduction program will eventually affect all student in kindergarten through third grade, at every schools. But some teachers and administrator think that school will still have problems even if classes are small because school don't have the necessary equipments and trained teacher to provide good instruction.
Proofreading for Plural -S Ending Errors:

1. Read your work out loud, reading exactly what you have written. Often you'll hear an -s ending that shouldn't be there, or recognize that an -s ending is missing.

2. Look at the count nouns in your sentences. Ask yourself if you are referring to one person or thing, or more than one person or thing.

3. Check to make sure that you have not added -s endings to non-count nouns. Refer to the list of non-count nouns in this unit.

4. Look at each noun preceded by one, another, each, every, either, and neither. Make sure that the noun does not have an -s ending.

5. Look at each noun preceded by one of, every one of, each of, either of and neither of. Make sure that the noun has an -s ending.