



Lesson5: Number of Noun English Teachers On Call

The number of a noun indicates whether a person or thing is one or more than one. Nouns have two numbers.

1. Singular Number

Singular number shows only one person or thing.

Example. Girl, tree, boat

2. Plural Number

The plural number shows more than one person, place, or thing.

Example: nurses, babies, pens, animals

How Plural Noun Are Formed

1. By adding 's' to the singular

Singular	Plural
Book	books
Chair	chairs
Shoe	shoes
Cousin	cousins

2. By adding 'es' to nouns ending in X, S, SH, CH

Singular	Plural
Box	boxes
Church	churches
Bush	bushes
Gas	gases

3. By adding 'es' to nouns ending in -o

Singular	Plural
Potato	potatoes
Hero	heroes
Mosquito	mosquitoes
Tomato	tomatoes

Some words or nouns ending in 'o' only adds 's' to the singular form.

Photo	photos
Solo	solos
Bamboo	bamboos
Piano	pianos
Trio	trios
Bolo	bolos

4. By changing Y after a consonant into 'ies'

Singular	Plural
Baby	babies
Country	countries
Lady	ladies
Story	stories

5. By adding 's' to the singular if 'Y' comes after a vowel (a, e, i, o, u)

Singular	Plural
Day	days
Valley	valleys
Boy	boys
Guy	guys

Monkey

Monkeys

6. By changing 'f' or 'fe' to ves

Singular

Plural

Shelf

shelves

Wolf

wolves

Life

lives

Wife

wives

Some nouns ending in 'f' only add 's' to the singular form to make them plural.

Singular

Plural

Roof

roofs

Hoof

hoofs

Proof

proofs

Chief

chiefs

Belief

beliefs

Mischief

mischiefs

7. By changing and adding the inside vowel (irregular plurals)

Singular

Plural

Mouse

mice

Goose

geese

Dormouse

dormice

Man

men

Louse

lice

Tooth

teeth

Some nouns have the same spelling for both the singular and plural.

Singular

Plural

Sheep	sheep
Cattle	cattle
Swine	swine
Deer	deer
Fish	fish or fishes
Furniture	furniture
Advice	advice

8. By adding _‘en’

Singular	Plural
Child	children
Ox	oxen

Some nouns are plural in form but singular in number, in use and in meaning.

Acoustics	civics	politics
Aerobics	athletics	economics
Linguistics	mathematics	measles
Mumps	static's	physics
News	statistics	whereabouts

PLURAL OF COMPOUND NOUNS

1. Compound nouns usually form their plural by adding ‘s’ to the most important word or words.

Singular	Plural
Governor general	governor generals
Sergeant at arms	sergeant at arms
Daughter-in-law	daughters –in-law
Editor-in-chief	editors-in-chief

2. Compound nouns ending in 'ful' form the plural by adding 's' to the last syllable.

Singular	Plural
Spoonful	spoonfuls
Handful	handfuls
Cupful	cupfuls
Teaspoonful	teaspoonfuls

9. Numbers, letters, and symbols form the plural by adding 's' to singular.

Singular	Plural
8	8's
a	a's

10. When a name is preceded by a title, either the name or the title must be pluralized.

Singular	Plural
Miss Garcia	The Misses Garcia or The
Miss Garcia	
Mr. Alba	Messrs. Alba or The Mr.
Alba	
Dr. Bautista	The Doctors Bautista or The Dr.
Bautista	

11. Some nouns taken from foreign languages retain or keep their foreign plural.

Singular	Plural
Radius	radii
Alumnus	alumni
Basis	bases

Analysis	analyses
Synopsis	synopses
Datum	data
Bacterium	bacteria
Alumna	alumnae
Crisis	crises
Oasis	oases
Thesis	theses
Stratum	strata
Vertebra	vertebrae
Forum	for a

Some nouns taken from foreign languages both foreign and English have English and foreign plural.

Singular	English Plural	Foreign Plural
Formula	formulas	formulae
Memorandum	memorandums	memoranda
Curriculum	curriculum	curricula
Appendix	appendixes	appendices
Index	indexes	indices

Exercise 9

Write the plural of the following:

1. fungus
2. cactus
3. syllabus
4. criteria
5. mystery
6. stimulus
7. medium
8. lady-in-waiting
9. son-in-law

10. spy



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