

Regular & Irregular Plural Nouns

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1 Grammar Notes

A. Introduction

A noun is a person, place, or thing.

A **singular** noun is **1** person, place, or thing.



a book



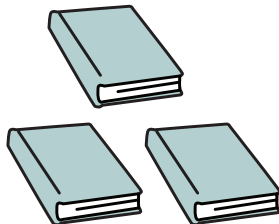
an apple



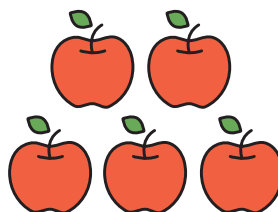
1 tree

A **plural** noun is **2 or more** people, places, or things.

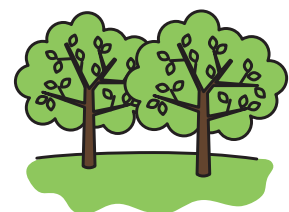
In English, the plural is usually formed by adding **-s** to a noun.



books



apples



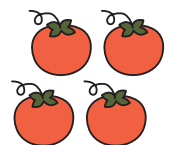
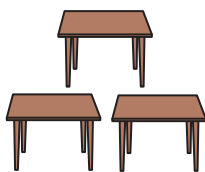
2 trees

1 Grammar Notes cont.

B. Regular Plural Nouns

Let's take a closer look at how to form **regular** plural nouns in English.

Nouns	Rule	Singular	Plural
most nouns	add -s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • banana • flower • toy • dog • table 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • bananas • flowers • toys • dogs • tables
nouns ending in consonant + -y	change -y to -i and add -es	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • candy • butterfly • puppy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • candies • butterflies • puppies
nouns ending in -s, -z, -x, -ch, -sh	add -es	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • kiss • waltz • box • watch • dish 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • kisses • waltzes • boxes • watches • dishes
nouns ending in -o	add -es	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • potato • tomato 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • potatoes • tomatoes



1 Grammar Notes cont.

C. Irregular Plural Nouns

Some nouns in English have **irregular plural forms**. This means we **can't add -s**. Instead, there's a change to the ending or middle of a word. Let's take a closer look at how to form **irregular plural nouns** in English.

Nouns	Rule	Singular	Plural
nouns ending in <i>-f</i>	change <i>-f</i> to <i>-v</i> and add <i>-es</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> wolf leaf 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> wolves leaves
nouns ending in <i>-fe</i>	change <i>-fe</i> to <i>-ve</i> and add <i>-s</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> knife life 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> knives lives
nouns ending in <i>-us</i>	change <i>-us</i> to <i>-i</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> cactus syllabus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> cacti syllabi
nouns with a middle <i>-a-</i>	change <i>-a-</i> to <i>-e-</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> man woman 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> men women
nouns with a middle <i>-oo-</i>	change <i>-oo-</i> to <i>-ee-</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> tooth foot 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> teeth feet
nouns with a middle <i>-ou-</i>	change <i>-ou-</i> to <i>-i-</i> and change <i>-s-</i> to <i>-c-</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> mouse louse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> mice lice
word change		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> child person 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> children people
no change		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> deer fish 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> deer fish



Note:

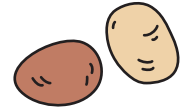
Not all nouns with the middle vowels *-a-*, *-oo-*, and *-ou-* follow the irregular plural rules. Some nouns take a regular *-s* ending, such as:

- car → cars
- booth → booths
- house → houses

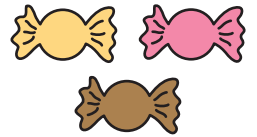
2 Regular Plurals

Write the regular plural form of each noun in brackets.

Ex My favorite meal is steak and potatoes.
(potato)

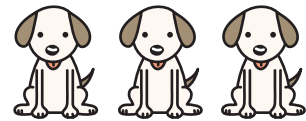


1 She got a lot of new _____ for her birthday.
(toy)

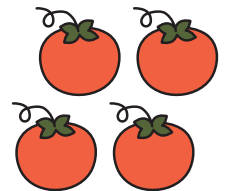


2 How many _____ are in that bowl?
(candy)

3 I own 3 _____.
(watch)



4 How many _____ do we need at the table?
(chair)

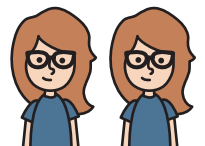


5 They have 3 _____.
(dog)

6 He grows _____ in his garden.
(tomato)



7 There are 4 _____ on the bed.
(pillow)



8 Do you have 2 _____?
(sister)

9 We want to buy some _____.
(T-shirt)



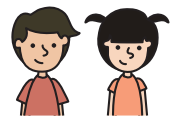
3 Irregular Plurals

Write the irregular plural form of each noun in brackets.

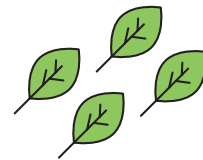
Ex There are 5 women on the bus.
(woman)



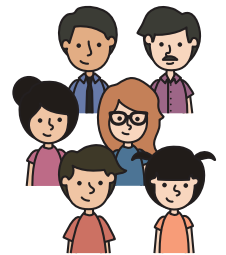
1 That man has smelly _____ .
(foot)



2 How many _____ do they have?
(child)



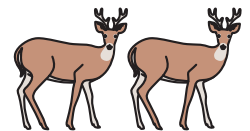
3 Are you scared of _____ ?
(mouse)



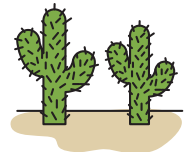
4 I spent all afternoon raking the _____ .
(leaf)

5 The _____ in that family all have brown hair.
(man)

6 There are many _____ at the beach today.
(person)



7 Be careful with those _____ . They are very sharp.
(knife)



8 Look at all the _____ in the park!
(deer)

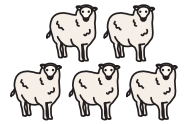
9 She loves the _____ that grow along the desert highway.
(cactus)

4 Find the Error

Find one error in each sentence.

Rewrite the sentences with the correct plural forms.

1 There are a lot of sheeps in that field.



2 Persons say that this class is difficult.



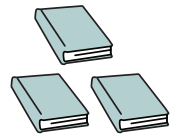
3 Do you do the dishes every night?

4 There are 6 rose in that bouquet.



5 I have a lot of bookes in my bookshelf.

6 They said they have happy life.



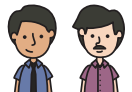
7 She brushes her tooth every morning.

8 We like catching butterflys in the summer.



9 He became friends with a pack of wolfs in that movie.

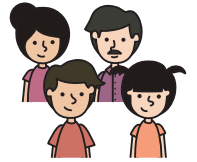
10 There were many man and women at the concert.



5 Interview Your Partner

Ask your partner these questions, and write his or her answers on the lines below. Pay attention to plural noun forms when you answer your partner's questions.

1 How many people are in your family?

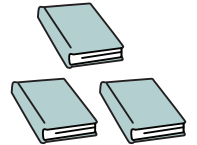


2 What are your hobbies?

3 Do you have any pets?

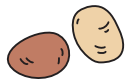


4 What are 2 of your favorite movies?



5 What are some of your favorite books?

6 Are you afraid of mice?



7 Do you like to eat potatoes? How about tomatoes?



8 Do you brush your teeth twice a day?



9 Do you wash the dishes after dinner?

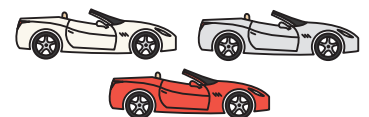
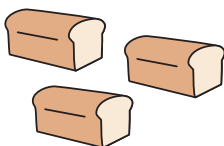
10 Do you usually get a lot of toys on your birthday?



6 Quiz

Circle the correct plural form.

- Ex** We have 2 dogs and 3 _____ at our house.
 a) cat c) cate
 b) cates **d) cats**
- 1** I packed my old clothes into _____ .
 a) box c) boxes
 b) boxs d) boxses
- 2** The police didn't catch the 2 _____ .
 a) thief c) thieve
 b) thieves d) thieves
- 3** She brought 3 _____ of bread to make sandwiches for the picnic.
 a) loaves c) loafs
 b) loafes d) loave
- 4** My grandma gives me a lot of _____ when she comes to visit.
 a) kisess c) kiss
 b) kises d) kisses
- 5** My cat caught many _____ last year.
 a) mouses c) mouse
 b) mices d) mice
- 6** My dad always buys my mom _____ for her birthday.
 a) floweres c) flowers
 b) flowere d) flower
- 7** Do you like to eat _____ that are mashed or roasted?
 a) potatoe c) potatos
 b) potatoes d) potato
- 8** There are a lot of _____ in the park.
 a) goose c) geeses
 b) geese d) geeses
- 9** My neighbors have 3 _____ in the driveway.
 a) cars c) cares
 b) care d) car



A Answer Key

2 Regular Plurals

- | | | |
|------------|-------------|-------------|
| 1. toys | 4. chairs | 7. pillows |
| 2. candies | 5. dogs | 8. sisters |
| 3. watches | 6. tomatoes | 9. T-shirts |

3 Irregular Plurals

- | | | |
|-------------|-----------|-----------|
| 1. feet | 4. leaves | 7. knives |
| 2. children | 5. men | 8. deer |
| 3. mice | 6. people | 9. cacti |

4 Find the Error

- There are a lot of **sheep** in that field.
- People** say that this class is difficult.
- Do you do the **dishes** every night?
- There are 6 **roses** in that bouquet.
- I have a lot of **books** in my bookshelf.
- They said they have happy **lives**.
- She brushes her **teeth** every morning.
- We like catching **butterflies** in the summer.
- He became friends with a pack of **wolves** in that movie.
- There were many **men** and women at the concert.

5 Interview Your Partner

Answers will vary.

Monitor your students for correct plural forms.

6 Quiz

- | | | | | |
|------|------|------|------|------|
| 1. c | 3. a | 5. d | 7. b | 9. a |
| 2. d | 4. d | 6. c | 8. b | |

Spelling Note:

This lesson shows the American spelling of the words *Favorite* and *Neighbor*. Most other English-speaking countries spell these words this way: *Favourite* and *Neighbour*. Make it a challenge for your students to find these words in the lesson and see if they know the alternate spellings.

Editor's Note:

For more practice with singular and plural nouns, try our other Fun Grammar Lessons:

- Articles: A, An, The
<https://ellii.com/lessons/fun-grammar-lessons/2494-articles-a-an-the>
- There Is / There Are
<https://ellii.com/lessons/fun-grammar-lessons/2492-there-is-there-are>