

Lesson  
1

# Agreement in Person and Number

A verb must agree with its subject in person and number. Singular subjects take singular verbs; plural subjects take plural verbs. In the present tense of all verbs except *be*, the only form that changes is third person singular. For most verbs, add *-s* to make that form.

	Verbs Other than <i>Be</i>		<i>Be</i> , Present Tense		<i>Be</i> , Past Tense	
	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
1st	I ride	we ride	I am	we are	I was	we were
2nd	you ride	you ride	you are	you are	you were	you were
3rd	he/she/it rides	they ride	he/she/it is	they are	he/she/it was	they were

Don't be distracted by words that come between the subject and verb.

The **passengers** on the 10:20 A.M. train **are departing** the train at this moment.

## A. Identifying Subjects and Verbs That Agree in Number

In each sentence, underline the subject and the verb. On the line following the sentence, write whether the two parts of the sentence **Agree** or **Disagree** in number.

1. A public transportation system relieve traffic congestion. \_\_\_\_\_
2. The subway systems in many cities are complicated networks of tunnels. \_\_\_\_\_
3. Workers and shoppers in the city appreciates the speed of a subway. \_\_\_\_\_
4. Boston were the first city in the United States to have a subway. \_\_\_\_\_
5. The cost of riding most subways is less than parking fees in the downtown area. \_\_\_\_\_
6. Commuters in Washington, D.C., is pleased with the city's modern subway system. \_\_\_\_\_

## B. Making Subjects and Verbs Agree in Number

In each sentence, underline the verb in parentheses that agrees with the subject.

1. The subway in New York City (is, are) one of the largest in the world.
2. All of the cars on each train (is, are) filled during the rush hours.
3. The many lines in this system (carry, carries) commuters all over the city.
4. To many visitors, the trains in New York's system (is, are) unbelievably crowded.
5. The first section of New York's subway system (was, were) opened in 1904.
6. On the west coast, the Bay Area Rapid Transit, called BART, (connect, connects) San Francisco with neighboring cities.
7. Subway riders heading east out of the city (travel, travels) under the San Francisco Bay.
8. Many other large cities of the world (has, have) subway systems also.
9. Subways in Moscow (has, have) chandeliers and oil paintings.
10. The people of London (call, calls) their subway system "the tube."

**Agreement in Person and Number***More Practice***A. Making Subjects and Verbs Agree in Number**

In each sentence, underline the verb in parentheses that agrees with the subject.

1. Our mascot, as well as the team and coach, (travel, travels) to all of the games.
2. The giraffe's long neck, like the pelican's beak and the crane's long legs, (has, have) been important in the animal's evolution.
3. Three rivers—the Mississippi, Missouri, and Illinois—(meet, meets) in St. Louis.
4. Many words in English (come, comes) from words in other languages.
5. Branwell Brontë, as well as his famous sisters, (was, were) an imaginative writer.
6. We all (need, needs) encouragement and recognition for our efforts.
7. Nurses in the burn unit (know, knows) that patients need emotional support.
8. Emus, flightless birds of Australia, (weigh, weighs) about 100 pounds each.
9. Trips around the world on a freighter (is, are) becoming quite popular.
10. I, together with my cousin, (plan, plans) to attend summer school.
11. The birth of conjoined twins (is, are) a relatively rare event.
12. The needles on a fir tree (is, are) actually its leaves.

**B. Correcting Agreement Errors**

Underline the six verbs in this paragraph that do not agree with their subjects. On the lines below, write the numbers of the sentences in which you find agreement errors. After each sentence number, write the subject and the verb form that agrees with it.

(1) The subway trains in Washington, D.C., is called the Metro. (2) The Metro links Washington, D.C., Maryland, and Virginia with more than 90 miles of railway and over 400 Metrobus routes. (3) Each passenger riding the trains need to buy a farecard. (4) Farecard machines at the entrances of each station sells farecards and special passes for a variety of prices. (5) This way commuters to the city use the same farecard every day. (6) The Metro, along with all the Metrobuses, carry about 900,000 riders daily. (7) Metro passengers who must take a Metrobus can obtain a bus transfer for only 25 cents. (8) The five distinct lines in the Metro are named by color and by their final destinations. (9) The police force in the Metro stations monitor the activities to ensure that the Metro is one of the safest public transportation systems in the world. (10) The Metro, unlike other public transportation systems, prohibit eating, drinking, and smoking on the trains to keep them clean.

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_____	_____

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## Application

### A. Proofreading for Errors in Agreement

Find the verbs in this paragraph that disagree with their subjects. On the lines below, rewrite the paragraph, correcting all agreement errors.

One of the greatest engineering feats of the 20th century are the tunnel under the English Channel. The idea of a tunnel between two countries are about 200 years old. However, lack of technology, funding, and interest delayed the project until 1987. The tunnel between Cheriton, England, and Calais, France, which opened in 1994, are called the Chunnel. The trains under the sea travels at 80 miles per hour. The capacity of the tunnels are 600 trains per day. Actually, three tunnels exist under the Channel. One of the tunnels are a service tunnel. Under the water, the tracks runs for 24 miles. The trip takes only 35 minutes.

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### B. Making Subjects and Verb Agree in Writing

Choose one of the topics below and write a paragraph of at least five sentences about it. Use the present tense throughout. Make sure the subjects and verbs of all the sentences agree.

- Why public transportation is a good idea
- San Francisco cable cars (or another old transportation system)
- Why I like (or dislike) using public transportation
- Ideas for improvement in public transportation in my area

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