

Lesson 16

Singular and Plural Nouns

Most plural nouns are formed by adding *-s* or *-es* to the singular form.

Singular nouns name one person, place, or thing. **Plural nouns** name more than one. Study the chart to learn how to change singular nouns to plural nouns.

Singular to Plural	Examples	
1. Add <i>-s</i> to most nouns.	building—buildings motor—motors	fire—fires river—rivers
2. Add <i>-es</i> to nouns that end with x, z, ch, sh, s, or ss .	fox—foxes waltz—waltzes ranch—ranches	bush—bushes walrus—walruses class—classes
3. Add <i>-s</i> to nouns that end with a vowel plus y .	monkey—monkeys subway—subways	boy—boys delay—delays
4. For nouns that end with a consonant plus y , change the y to i and add <i>-es</i> .	berry—berries spy—spies story—stories	lady—ladies vacancy—vacancies comedy—comedies
5. For most nouns that end with f or fe , change f or fe to v and add <i>-es</i> .	leaf—leaves half—halves wolf—wolves	knife—knives life—lives wife—wives
6. Add <i>-s</i> to some other nouns that end in f and to all nouns that end in ff .	roof—roofs chief—chiefs	staff—staffs sheriff—sheriffs
7. Add <i>-s</i> to most nouns that end with a vowel plus o .	radio—radios stereo—stereos	patio—patios studio—studios
8. For some nouns that end in a consonant plus o , add <i>-s</i> . For others, add <i>-es</i> .	silo—silos piano—pianos photo—photos	tomato—tomatoes torpedo—torpedoes hero—heroes

If you're not sure of a noun's plural form, look up the noun in the dictionary. If no plural form is given, add *-s* or *-es* to the singular form. If the noun changes in another way, you'll find the plural form listed right after the entry word in the dictionary or at the end of the entry.

Exercise A

Write the plural form for each noun on the line provided.

Example: skyscraper

Answer: skyscrapers

1. branch _____
2. key _____
3. silo _____
4. fly _____
5. stream _____
6. igloo _____
7. photo _____
8. earthquake _____
9. box _____
10. blitz _____
11. explosion _____
12. campus _____
13. stranger _____
14. wish _____
15. process _____
16. patch _____
17. essay _____
18. agency _____
19. puff _____
20. reef _____

Exercise B

Fill in each blank with the plural form of the noun in parentheses.

Example: The _____ are from the south. (wind)

Answer: The winds are from the south.

1. This story has too many _____. (climax)
2. My family has more _____ than I thought. (ranch)
3. Some _____ lay eggs in other birds' nests. (cuckoo)
4. _____ have fuzzy leaves. (Tomato)
5. Why do _____ wear pointed shoes? (elf)
6. Clouds hung low over the high _____. (cliff)
7. How many _____ did Beethoven write? (symphony)
8. How many _____ did Shakespeare write? (play)

Lesson 17**Other Plural Nouns**

Some plural nouns are formed in unusual ways.

Study the chart below to learn five more ways that nouns are made plural.

Singular to Plural	Examples
1. Change a vowel or vowels within the singular form.	man—men goose—geese tooth—teeth woman—women
2. Add letters to the end.	ox—oxen child—children series—series
3. Some nouns don't change at all.	moose—moose deer—deer Iroquois—Iroquois
4. For some nouns from foreign languages, use the foreign way of forming the plural.	bacillus—bacilli analysis—analyses
5. For compound nouns of more than one word, make only the most important word plural.	swimming pool—swimming pools great-grandmother—great-grandmothers brother-in-law—brothers-in-law merry-go-round—merry-go-rounds

Exercise A

Write the plural form of each noun on the line provided.

Example: dining car

Answer: dining cars

1. child _____

6. ox _____

2. Irishman _____

7. maid of honor _____

3. mother-in-law _____

8. rail fence _____

4. runner-up _____

9. triple play _____

5. sheep _____

10. policewoman _____

Exercise B

Fill in each blank with the plural form of the noun in parentheses. Use a dictionary if necessary.

Example: This team needs two good _____. (left-hander)

Answer: This team needs two good left-handers.

1. Halloween calls for _____. (jack-o'-lantern)
2. What are the _____ for your conclusions? (basis)
3. The _____ live on the northern plains. (Sioux)
4. We have enough furniture for three _____. (living room)
5. Many _____ speak more than one language. (Japanese)
6. Some _____ are wise beyond their years. (child)
7. Don't _____ have sharp spines? (sea urchin)
8. How many _____ do centipedes have? (foot)
9. Twelve _____ witnessed the accident. (passer-by)
10. For some people, life is a series of _____. (crisis)
11. I have three _____. (sister-in-law)
12. Graph the point on the x and y _____. (axis)
13. A doctor must make many _____. (diagnosis)
14. Most movie theaters used to show _____. (double bill)
15. I just saw three _____ cross the highway. (deer)

Exercise C

Look up each noun below in a dictionary. Write down its one or more plural forms on the line provided.

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|------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. silo _____ | 5. elk _____ |
| 2. radius _____ | 6. scarf _____ |
| 3. trout _____ | 7. hippopotamus _____ |
| 4. soprano _____ | 8. phenomenon _____ |