

Subject-Verb Agreement: How It Works

In the present tense, the verb has to match its subject: one, or more than one.

1. The verb must match the subject

The dog **barks**.

The dogs **bark**.

One dog barks. Two dogs bark.

2. One: the verb ends in s

A frog **hops**.

Kim **reads**.

He, she and it take a verb with s.

3. More than one: no s

Frogs **hop**.

Kim and Wade **read**.

We and they take a verb with no s.

4. I and you

I and **you** take the verb with no s, even though they name one person.

I walk. **You walk**. **She walks**.

How to make them agree

1

Find the subject.

Who or what is it about?

2

One, or more than one?

Count the subject.

3

Pick the verb.

One: verb with s. More than one: no s.

is, are, was, were, has, have

One: is, was, has

The cat **is** asleep.

More than one: are, were, have

The cats **are** asleep.

I am, I was, I have. **You** are, you were, you have.

Watch out

Words between the subject and the verb do not change the verb.

The **box** of crayons **is** on the desk.

The subject is box, not crayons.

Two subjects joined by and are more than one:

Gus and Dot **run**.