

Nominal Inflection

13th lecture

Dr. Basima Othman

Definition of Nouns

A noun is a naming word. It is the name of:

- **a person** (John, Ali, Huda,.....)
- **a place** (Erbil, India, Canada,.....)
- **a thing** (door, paper, tree,.....)
- **a state of being** (mortality, joy, peace,.....)

There are four main kinds of nouns

1. Common noun: It does not name any particular person, place or thing. It speaks in general about all persons, places or things of the same kind.

Examples: The boy kicked the ball.

2. Proper noun: It names a particular person, place or thing.

Examples: Ahmed lives in Canada.

There are four main kinds of nouns

3. Abstract noun: It names a feeling or a state of being which has no form or shape and which cannot be seen or touched, but whose existence we recognize. Examples: Persistence leads to success.

4. Collective noun: It names a group or collection of persons or things taken together and treated as one. It is **one collection** of many parts Examples:

We have one forest, but it is made of many trees.

We have one class, but it is made of many students.

We have one troop, but it is made of many soldiers.

Nouns can be further classified into:

- **Countable nouns:** Nouns which can be counted are called countable nouns. So these nouns can be either singular or plural. Examples: **one boy, many boys.**
- **Uncountable nouns:** Nouns which cannot be counted are called uncountable nouns (or mass nouns). So they are neither singular nor plural. Some common nouns and abstract nouns belong to this category. Examples: **some rice, much happiness.**

Grammatical Categories of Nouns

1. Number

2. Person

3. Gender

Number

As Grammatical Categories of Nouns

Number

There are two terms of this category in English: **singular** (the concept of one) and **plural** (the concept of more than one).

Thus, a **singular noun** names one person, place, thing, or idea.

one cat, one store, one item

While a **plural noun** names two or more persons, places, things, or ideas.

two cats, four stores, fifteen items

Rules of plurality (1)

1. For most singular nouns, add the suffix –s;

book-books, girl-girls, google-googles

2. For nouns ending with s, x, z, sh, or ch, add es:

gas-gases, wax, waxes, dish-dishes

3. For nouns ending with a consonant and y, change the y to i and add es. For nouns ending with a vowel and y, add s:

sky-skies, army, armies, boy-boys, alley-alleys

Rules of plurality (2)

4. For some nouns ending with f or fe, add s. For others, change the f to v and add s or es;

- belief-beliefs, roof-roofs
- loaf-loaves, life-lives, knife-knives, hoof-hooves, thief-thieves

5. For nouns that end with o, add s or es:

- cello-cellos, piano-pianos, radio-radios, zoo-zoos
- potato-potatoes, tomato-tomatoes, cargo-cargoes, mango-mangoes

Rules of plurality (3)

6. Some nouns have irregular plural forms. You will have to memorize the spelling for irregular plurals.

child-children

foot-feet

tooth-teeth

goose - geese

mouse-mice

man / woman - men / women

Rules of plurality (4)

7. A few nouns have the same singular and plural forms.

Sheep-sheep

Chinese-Chinese

moose-moose

grapefruit-grapefruit

deer-deer

salmon-salmon

tuna → tuna

trout → trout

Rules of plurality (5)

8. Some nouns have only plural forms.

earnings, media, premises, proceeds, quarters, scissors, trousers, goods, grounds, thanks, dues, jeans, savings

9. Some nouns that end with *-s* look plural but are considered singular.

economics, news, mathematics, mumps, measles, lens, summons

10. Some nouns that can be singular or plural (depending upon how they are used)

corps, headquarters, gross, means, ethics, data, species, series, class, group, staff, company, committee, board, public, police

Some nouns have different forms of plural which bear different meanings

Singular	Plural
brother	brothers (by birth), brethren (of a society)
die	dies (for coining or stamping), dice (for play)
fish	fishes (separate fish), fish (collective)
index	indexes (in books), indices (in algebra)
penny	pennies (separate coins), pence (sum of money)
staff	staves (poles), staffs (bodies of assistants)

Rules of plurality in compound nouns (6)

11. For most compound nouns, make the most important word plural.

a. For a compound noun written as one word, make the last part plural:

billboard – billboards

campground – campgrounds

b. For a compound noun written with hyphens or as separate words, make the key word plural.

maid of honor – maids of honor

attorney-at-law – attorneys-at-law

step-brother – step-brothers

Great-grandma – Great-grandmas

Rules of plurality (7)

12. Letters, numbers, symbols, and words used as words are made plural by adding an *apostrophe* (') and *s*.

- #'s

A - A's

25 - 25's

and - and's

ABC & 123 - ABC's & 123's

Multiple Choice

Which 2 words correctly complete these sentences?

We bought a pair of _____ and some _____ at the yard sale.

- A. ski . . . dishes
- B. skis . . . dishes
- C. skies . . . dish
- D. skis . . . dishes

Multiple Choice

One of her _____ is studying _____ in the wild.

- A. hobbies . . . monkeyes
- B. hobbyes . . . monkies
- C. hobbies . . . monkeys
- D. hobbys. . . monkees

Multiple Choice

A team of _____ pulled a wagon with three _____ inside.

- A. ox . . . woman
- B. oxen . . . women
- C. oxes . . . women
- D. oxens . . . womans

Multiple Choice

Near the campsite they saw two _____ and several _____.

A. deer . . . moose

B. deers . . . moose

C. deers . . . mooses

D. deer . . . meese

Can you make these nouns plural?

1. thief
2. woman
3. fish
4. photo
5. die

Next:

Grammatical Categories of Nouns

- **Person**
- **Gender**