

English Thrive

Subject Verb Agreement Difficult Exercises with Answers

Understanding Subject-Verb Agreement

Subject-verb agreement is a fundamental aspect of English grammar. It refers to the rule that a subject must agree in number and person with its verb. At first glance, this might seem simple—plural subjects take plural verbs, and singular subjects take singular verbs. However, there are instances when subject-verb agreement can become tricky. In this blog post, we'll explore difficult exercises that test your understanding of subject-verb agreement.

Core Rules of Subject-Verb Agreement

1. Singular subjects take singular verbs, and plural subjects take plural verbs.

Example: "The cat runs fast." / "The cats run fast."

2. Compound subjects (joined by 'and') generally take a plural verb. Exception: If the compound subject refers to the same person or thing, it can take a singular verb.

3. When subjects are joined by 'or' or 'nor', the verb should agree with the subject closest to it.

4. Indefinite pronouns (like everyone, somebody, none) are usually treated as singular, with exceptions.

5. Collective nouns can take either singular or plural verbs, depending on context.

Exercises of Subject Verb Agreement

Below are some tricky exercises. Choose the correct verb for each sentence.

Exercise 1 Example: Neither the teacher nor the students (was / were) happy with the results.

Exercise 2 Example: Everyone (is / are) excited about the concert.

Exercise 3 Example: The news (was / were) shocking to everyone.

Exercise 4 Example: The audience (was / were) impressed with the performance.

Exercise 5 Example: All of the cake (was / were) eaten by the end of the party.

... and many more exercises included.

Answer Table

At the end of the exercises, an answer table is provided for self-check.

Final Thoughts

Subject-verb agreement may look simple at first, but tricky cases with compound subjects, collective nouns, or indefinite pronouns can cause confusion. With regular practice, these rules will feel natural in both writing and speaking. Keep practicing with exercises and it will soon become second nature.