# Writing Centre

# VERB AGREEMENT

1. Use a plural verb when the subject of a sentence is composed of two or more nouns or pronouns connected by “and”

**Example:**

She *and* her friends are at the mall

1. Use a singular verb when two or more singular nouns or pronouns are connected by “or” or “nor”.

**Example:**

The book *or* the binder is in the drawer

1. **Doesn't** is a contraction of ‘does not’ and should be used only with a singular subject.

**Don't**is a contraction of ‘do not’ and should be used only with a plural subject.

The exception to this rule appears cases of first person and second person pronouns ‘I’ and ‘you’. With these pronouns, the contraction don't should be used.

**Example:**

She doesn’t like pizza.

They don’t like pizza.

1. Nouns with only one part require singular verbs. (E.g. civics, mathematics, dollars, measles, and news.)

**Example:**

The car is in the driveway

1. Nouns with two parts require plural verbs. (E.g. tweezers, scissors, pants, shears.)

**Example:**

The tweezers are dull

1. Expressions such as *with, together with, including, accompanied by, in addition to*, or *as well* do not change the (number singularize or pluralize/grammatical number) of the subject. If the subject is singular, the verb is as well.

**Example:**

The teacher, *accompanied by* his son, is travelling to Florida.

All of the toys*, including* yours, are in the toy chest.

**Resources:**

Handouts by Nicole McDermott

Purdue Online: Making Subjects and Verbs Agree

[owl.english.purdue.edu](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/599/01/)

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