# Subject-Verb Agreement

# Key Points to Remember

## Sometimes words that look plural are singular in meaning

- The **news** was bad.
- **Politics** is interesting.
- Two **minutes** is very little time.
- Two million **dollars** is a lot of money.

**\*\*If in doubt, look the word up in a dictionary;
it will tell you whether the word is singular or plural.**

## Words that stand for a group are singular

- The **team** is late.
- The **crew** was well-trained.
- The **Council** is meeting.

## Words like "none," "some" and "most" can be singular or plural

- Most of the **snow** is melted. ("Snow" is singular).
- Most of the **people** are gone. ("People" is plural).
- **None** of the **consultants** agrees with the proposal. This one can be tricky. Here's the rule:
  o None usually means "no single one." In the sentence above, "None" indicates that no single one of the consultants agrees with the proposal.
  o In rare cases, though, "none" is used to mean "no two" and requires a plural verb. For example, "None of the consultants agree on the proposal" indicates that there are two or more consultants, and no two of them agree with each other on the proposal.

## The words "number," "variety" and "majority" can be singular or plural, depending on whether they're preceded by "a" or "the.

- A number are, but the number is.
- A variety are, but the variety is.
- A majority are, but the majority is.

## If you use two or more subjects joined by "and," use a plural verb

- The president and vice president are at Camp David.
- Tanks, trucks and jeeps are streaming across the border.
- Broccoli, carrots, and zucchini are some of my favorite vegetables.

## Two or more subjects joined by "or," "nor," "either ... or" or "neither ... nor," make the verb agree with the nearest subject

- The mayor or the Council **members** are to blame.
- Neither the Council members nor the **mayor** is to blame

## If you use "each" or "every" before a compound subject, use a singular verb

- Each **camera** and each **lens** was inspected.
- Every **tape** and every **document** was released.