

## Tip #3 PLURAL NOUNS, PLURAL FORMS

### Basic Guidelines

Nouns and verbs must agree in number; that is, plural nouns require a plural form of the verb (*The tests are ...*), and singular nouns require a singular form of the verb (*The test is ...*).

Use plural forms more to stress “all” the members of the group. This usually has more impact than singling out only one (*each, every*) representative of a group. Check whether a noun is a “countable noun” (数えられる名詞) or a “noncountable noun” (数えられない名詞). Some nouns can be used either way, but avoid mixed usage.

#### 1. ORIGINAL

Finally, a conclusion is given in Section 5.

#### 1. REVISED

Finally, conclusions are given in Section 5.

### COMMENTS

It is hard to imagine “only one” conclusion! Be careful to use plural noun forms to indicate the plurality (more-than-1 concept).

#### 2. ORIGINAL

Therefore, examining management history from the past to present with relation to vegetation change is essential for considering future management strategy for their conservation.

#### 2. REVISED

Therefore, examining management history from the past to present with relation to vegetation change is essential for considering future management strategies for their conservation.

### COMMENTS

It is hard to imagine “only one” strategy! Be careful to use plural noun forms to indicate the plurality (more-than-1 concept).

In this sentence the subject is “examining” and such “-ing” noun forms (gerunds 動名詞) are treated as singular in nature; thus, “examining ... is essential...”.

---

#### 3. ORIGINAL

many project and application are ...

#### 3. REVISED

many projects and applications are ...

### COMMENTS

“many” is more than 1 and represents the concept of quantity, specifically number. Do NOT use a singular countable noun such as “project” or “application” when the concept is more than one, or with non-countable noun forms such as “research” (×“many research”).

“much” represents the concept of quantity, specifically amount. Do NOT use a countable noun with much. Use non-countable noun forms such as “much research”.

4. ORIGINAL

*In the future these technique will be applied various other areas*

4. REVISED

*In the future these techniques will be applied various other areas*

COMMENTS

“these/those” are words that mean “more than 1” and represent the concept of quantity, specifically number. “this/that” are used for singular countable noun such as “*this project*” or “*that project*” when the concept is singular in nature, or with a non-countable noun forms such as “*this research*” or “*that information*”.

5. ORIGINAL

*Battery, electrical appliances, fluorescent lights, accumulator, transformer, and all other hazardous waste are dumped without neutralization.*

5. REVISED

*Batteries, electrical appliances, fluorescent lights, accumulators, transformers, all other hazardous waste are dumped without neutralization.*

COMMENTS

Be consistent and use all plural forms (or all singular forms) in a series of examples of countable nouns

In this example, “*hazardous waste*” is treated as a non-countable noun in its concept; thus, “*hazardous wastes*” is incorrect.

6. ORIGINAL

*However, recent researches show that 2-dimensional MHD equilibria are not competent because the artificial containers are not really axisymmetric.*

6. REVISED

*However, recent research shows that 2-dimensional MHD equilibria are not competent because the artificial containers are not really axisymmetric.*

COMMENTS

Avoid a countable noun form when the noun is NOT countable in its context or meaning. In this example “*research*” is treated as a single concept; that is, as a non-count noun with no commonly-used plural form.

★ Words like ***advice, equipment, information, knowledge, progress, research, satisfaction, scenery, vocabulary, work***, and some other non-countable nouns are NOT used in plural forms except in unusual situations.

Incorrect Use

*advices are  
equipments are  
informations are  
researches are  
works are*

...

Correct Use

*advice is  
equipment is  
information is  
research is  
work is*

...

7. ORIGINAL

*Sustainable tourism aims at promoting a continuous tourist activity that raises awareness of the cultural and natural uniqueness of a certain destination, while resulting in minimal impacts.*

7. REVISED

*Sustainable tourism aims at promoting continuous tourist activities that raise awareness of the cultural and natural uniqueness of a certain destination, while resulting in minimal impacts.*

COMMENTS

The English in the original sentence is used properly: singular countable noun form (“activity”) with a singular verb form (“raises”). However, the concept naturally implies that “more than one activity” exists; thus, plural form is better.

Many singular count nouns are made into plural forms by adding an “-s”, though some spelling anomalies exist:

1. add -s                *schools, books, pens, ...*      (*alloy/alloys* use -s when -y is preceded by a vowel)
2. -y → ies            *city/cities, army/armies*      (-y is preceded by a consonant)
3. -f/-fe → -v(e)s    *half/halves, life/lives*
4. special              *man/men, foot/feet, sheep/sheep, child/children, ox/oxen*

Some count nouns, though, still use older plural forms from the original Latin or Greek languages that follow different patterns:

**Older Plural Forms**

-um	→	-a
addendum		addenda
agendum		agenda
bacterium		bacteria
curriculum		curricula
datum		data
desideratum		desiderata
erratum		errata
folium		folia
medium		media
memorandum		memoranda
ovum		ova
septum		septa
serum		sera
spectrum		spectra
stratum		strata
symposium		symposia

<b>-is</b>	→	<b>-es</b>
analysis		analyses
axis		axes
basis		bases
crisis		crises
diagnosis		diagnoses
ellipsis		ellipses
hypothesis		hypotheses
neurosis		neuroses
parenthesis		parentheses
psychosis		psychoses
synthesis		syntheses
thesis		theses

<b>-a</b>	→	<b>-ae</b>
alga		algae
antenna		antennae
brucella		brucellae
formula		formulae
larva		larvae
minutia		minutiae
nebula		nebulae
oasis		oases
vertebra		vertebrae

<b>-us</b>	→	<b>"-i" + special</b>
bacillus		bacilli
cactus		cacti
fungus		fungi
genus		genera
locus		loci
nucleus		nuclei
radius		radii
stimulus		stimuli
terminus		termini

<b>-ex/-ix</b>	→	<b>-ices</b>
----------------	---	--------------

appendix	appendixes/appendices
cicatrix	cicatrices
index	indexes/indices
matrix	matrices
vortex	vortices

<b>-on</b>	→	<b>-a</b>
------------	---	-----------

criterion	criteria
mitochondrion	mitochondria
phenomenon	phenomena
protozoon	protozoa

<b>-ma</b>	→	<b>-mata</b>
------------	---	--------------

neuroma	neuromata
stemma	stemmata
stigma	stigmata

<b>-en</b>	→	<b>-ina</b>
------------	---	-------------

foramen	foramina/foramens
---------	-------------------