



# ENGLISH GRAMMAR 2 INTERMEDIATE LEVEL

Unit 79 – Singular and plural

*tienganh*





# Singular and plural

## A PAIR OF JEANS

A

Sometimes we use a plural noun for one thing that has two parts. For example:



- ❖ These words are plural, so they take a plural verb:
  - EX1: My trousers **are** too long. (not My trousers is)
- ❖ You can also use a **pair of + these words**:
  - EX2: **Those are** nice **jeans**. or That's **a nice pair of** jeans. (not a nice jeans)
  - EX3: I need **some new glasses**. or I need **a new pair of** glasses.



# Singular and plural

## PHYSICS IS SINGULAR

B

❖ Some nouns end in **-ics**, but are not usually plural. For example:

- athletics                      gymnastics                      economics                      politics
- physics                      electronics                      maths (= mathematics)

EX4: **Gymnastics is** my favorite sport. (not Gymnastics are)

❖ **News** is not plural (see Unit 70B):

- EX5: I have **some news** for you. **It's** good news!

❖ Some words that end in **-s** can be singular or plural. For example:

- means                      a means of transport                      many means of transport
- series                      a TV series                      two TV series
- species                      a species of fish                      200 species of fish



# Singular and plural

## AUDIENCE “IS” PLURAL

C

❖ Some singular nouns are often used with a plural verb. For example:

- audience    committee    company    family    firm    government    staff    team

These nouns are all groups of people. We often think of them as a number of people (= they), not as one thing (= it). So we often use a **plural verb**:

- EX6: **The government** (= they) **have** decided to increase taxes.
- EX7: **The staff** at the company (= they) **are** not happy with their working conditions.

In the same way, we often use a plural verb after the name of a company or a sports team:

- EX8: **Shell have** increased the price of petrol.
- EX9: **Italy are** playing Brazil next Sunday (in a football match).

You can also use a singular verb (The government **wants** ... / Shell **has** ... etc.).

❖ We use a plural verb with **police**:

- EX10: **The police are** investigating the crime, but haven't arrested anyone yet. (not The police is ... hasn't)

Note that we say a **police officer** / a **policeman** / a **policewoman** (not a police).



# Singular and plural

## THE + PLURAL NAMES OF PEOPLE AND PLACES

D

- ❖ We do not often use **the plural of person** ('persons'). We normally use people (a plural word):
  - EX11: He's a nice **person**. but They are nice **people**. (not nice persons)
  - EX12: **Many people don't** have enough to eat. (not Many people doesn't)



# Singular and plural

## NORTHERN EUROPE

E

- ❖ We think of a sum of money, a period of time, a distance etc. as one thing. So we use a singular verb:
  - EX13: **Fifty thousand pounds** (= it) **was** stolen in the robbery. (not were stolen)
  - EX14: **Three years** (= it) **is** a long time to be without a job. (not Three years are)
  - EX15: **Two miles** **isn't** very far to walk.



# Singular and plural



## TÓM TẮT

1. Các danh từ chỉ đồ vật gồm nhiều phần (*trousers, pyjamas, glasses, binoculars, v.v...*) là số nhiều và phải đi với động từ số nhiều. ***My trousers are too long.***
2. Các danh từ tận cùng bằng **-ics** thường không phải là số nhiều, như ***Physics, gymnastics, electronics, v.v...***
3. Các danh từ tập hợp (***audience, committee, company, family, v.v....***) chỉ một nhóm người thường được dùng với động từ số nhiều. ***The government have decided to increase taxes.***
4. Số nhiều của **person** là **people**.
5. Các cụm danh từ chỉ số lượng, khoảng thời gian, khoảng cách được coi là số ít. ***Fifty thousands pounds was stolen in the robbery.***