
Forming Plurals Correctly

In English, nouns often change form when they are used to refer to more than one person, place, or thing.

For example:

My neighbor has a dog. (a dog = one dog)

BUT

I have two dogs. (dogs = two or more)

We call nouns that refer to two or more people, places, or things **plural nouns**. Six basic guidelines can help us spell plural nouns correctly.

1. For most words, simply add -s to name more than one.

Examples:

book → books toy → toys girl → girls

2. For words ending in -s, -x, -sh, -ch, or z, add -es to name more than one.

Examples:

glass → glasses fox → foxes church → churches

3. For most words ending in -f or -fe, change the -f- to -v- and add -es. Be careful, though, some words don't follow this pattern!

Examples:

knife → knives loaf → loaves

Exceptions:

belief → beliefs roof → roofs

4. When words end in -y, look closer. If a word ends in a consonant followed by a -y, change the -y to -i- and add -es. If a word ends in a vowel followed by a -y, simply add -s.

Examples:

fly → flies party → parties
toy → toys day → days

5. **When a word ends in -o, check the dictionary!** Sometimes, -o is followed by -es. Sometimes, it's just followed by -s.

potato → potatoes

piano → pianos

6. **Know that some words don't follow the guidelines.** Some words change in unusual ways. We call these **irregular plurals**.

Examples:

Singular	Plural
child	children
man	men
woman	women
person	people
deer	deer
fish	fish OR fishes
goose	geese
mouse	mice
ox	oxen
sheep	sheep
foot	feet
tooth	teeth

Remember:

A noun names a person,
a place, or a thing.

