



The Hitch-Students Guide to SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT



WHAT IS A SUBJECT?

The **subject** of a sentence can be a *person, place, thing* or an *idea* that either performs an action or is being described (Cambridge Dictionary).

EXAMPLES

- Arthur** is from planet Earth.
- Trillian** travels with Zaphod.

PRONOUNS CAN BE SUBJECTS AS WELL



I
You
She
He
It
We
They

WHAT IS A VERB?

A **verb** is "a word or phrase that describes an action, condition or experience" (Cambridge Dictionary).

EXAMPLES

- Ford **uses** *The Hitchhikers Guide to the Galaxy*.
- They **need** the Infinite improbability Drive.
- Arthur **likes** Trillian.
- We **love** spaceships.
- Marvin **cries** all the time.

COMMON DIFFICULTIES WHEN IT COMES TO S-V-A

One of the most common difficulties when facing subject-verb agreement is knowing when the subject requires a verb that ends in **-s** and when it doesn't.

Rule: use an **-s** with the third person singular (he, she, it, Arthur, Trillian).

- I **see** you.
- She **reads** on a screen.
- He **eats** when he's happy.
- It **seems** necessary.
- They **jump** to Magrathea.

Although there are some exceptions, we mostly use verbs that end with **-s** when we use the third-person singular (*she, he, it*) in the *Simple Present Tense*.

SOME SPELLING EXCEPTIONS IN THE SIMPLE PRESENT TENSE

1. When the verb ends in **-ss, -sh, -ch, -x, or -z**, we need to add **-es**.
EXAMPLE
-She **watches** (watch) over Marvin.
2. When the verb ends in a consonant + **y** we need to add **-ies**.
EXAMPLE
-She **studies** (study) the Universe.

RULES AND EXAMPLES OF S-V-A AND THE SUBJECT **IT**

1. **IT:** a 3rd person singular pronoun used to refer to an object, concept, place, idea, or animal.
EXAMPLE
-**It** (the notebook) has pages.
2. **IT'S:** a contraction using it + is.
EXAMPLE
-**It's** (the gem + is) pretty.

These rules apply to all verbs **except TO BE**.
To learn more about **TO BE**, check out our infographic:
TO BE or not TO BE.



Visit our page for more resources!

<http://generales.uprrp.edu/competencias-linguisticas/>

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