

AMA Manual of Style

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Collective Nouns

Brenda Gregoline

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Item type: section

Collective nouns may take either singular or plural verbs, depending on whether the word refers to the group as a unit or to its members as individuals. In American English, most nouns naming a group regarded as a unit are treated as singular. (See also , Grammar, Subject-Verb Agreement, Collective Nouns.) Fifty percent of my time is spent on administration. Fifty percent of all physicians do not exercise regularly. The audience was enthralled. This gathering is becoming noisy. At noon today the jury delivers its verdict. For a unit of measure, use a singular verb. Five milliliters was injected. Two weeks of

Plurals

Brenda Gregoline

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The plurals of most nouns are formed by adding -s or -es. However, English is irregular enough that it pays to consult a dictionary for most forms.

Collective nouns may take either singular or plural verbs, depending on whether the word refers to the group as a unit or to its members as individuals. In American English, most nouns naming a group regarded as a unit are treated as singular. (See also 7.8.5, Grammar, Subject-Verb Agreement, Collective Nouns.)...

Latin and Greek vs English

Brenda Gregoline

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There is a trend toward using English plurals rather than the traditional Latin or Greek. However, in most cases the latest edition of Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary or Dorland's or Stedman's medical dictionary should be followed. Consistency within a manuscript is key. |

Microorganisms

Brenda Gregoline

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When referring to the common vernacular plural of a genus, use roman lowercase letters. Consult the latest edition of Dorland's or Stedman's medical dictionary. For organisms that do not have a common plural, add the word species or organisms to the genus name to indicate a plural use (see also , Nomenclature, Organisms and Pathogens). |

When Not to Use Plurals

Brenda Gregoline

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Beware of “pluralizing” nouns that cannot stand on their own as plurals. serum samples (not “sera”) urine tests (not “urines”) |

Abbreviations

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For most all-capital abbreviations, the plural is formed by adding s. Do not use an apostrophe before the s. (See also , Punctuation, Apostrophe, Using Apostrophes to Form Plurals.) Note: When plural all-capital-letter abbreviations are found in an all-capital setting, such as a first-level heading, the plural s is still lowercase. REFERRAL PATTERNS IN MIDWESTERN HMOs |

Plurals of Symbols, Letters, Numbers, and Years

Brenda Gregoline

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Use 's to indicate the plural of letters, signs, or symbols spoken as such, or for words referred to as words when s alone would be confusing. Note the use of italics with the inflectional ending in roman type for words, letters, and numbers but not for symbols and signs. (See also , Punctuation, Apostrophe, Using Apostrophes to Form Plurals.) He uses too many and's. All of the capital P's should be underlined. Please use +'s to indicate a positive

result. Note: If the symbol can be easily expressed using words, this is preferred: Please use plus signs to indicate positive

False Singulars

Brenda Gregoline

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Some nouns, because they end in a “plural” form, are mistakenly taken to be plurals even though they should be treated as singular and take a singular verb (eg, measles, mumps, mathematics, genetics). Measles is a deadly disease in underdeveloped countries. A few nouns are usually used in the plural form; however, the distinction between plural and singular should be retained where appropriate. (See also , Grammar, Subject-Verb Agreement, False Plurals.) |

First Word of Sentences, Statements, Quotations, Titles, Subtitles, and Table Headings

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The first word of every complete sentence should be capitalized. The following should also be capitalized: # The first word of a formal statement that follows a colon Our conclusions may be stated thus: More research is needed. # The first word of a direct quotation (but see , Punctuation, Quotation Marks, Quotations)The report noted: “A candidate may be admitted after completing 2 years of medical school.” Kurt Vonnegut put it best when he said, “Writers can treat their mental illnesses every day.” Note: If the quotation is run into the sentence, a lowercase letter on the first word may

Proper Nouns

Brenda Gregoline

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Proper nouns are words used as names for unique individuals, events, objects, or places. | Capitalize names of cities, towns, counties, states, countries, continents, islands, airports, peninsulas, bodies of water, mountains and mountain ranges, streets, parks, forests, canyons, dams, and regions. If a common noun is capitalized in the singular, it is generally not capitalized in the plural. Atlantic and Pacific oceans Kennedy and Eisenhower expressways Mississippi and Missouri rivers Compass directions are not capitalized unless they are

generally accepted terms for regions. There is a large time difference between Europe and the Far East. Walk east until you arrive at the