

AMA Manual of Style

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Plurals

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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.)...

Collective Nouns

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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

Latin and Greek vs English

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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

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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

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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

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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

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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.) |

How Plurals Are Formed

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