

Grammar Explanation

Subject-Verb Agreement: Basic rules

Change the verb form to agree with the subjects in the following three cases:

- When using the present tense, add –s to the verb if the subject of the sentence is or can be replaced by *he*, *she*, or *it*. If not, just use the simple form.
 - Example: **Bob works** at his school; **he does** research for the chemistry department.
 - Example: **His colleagues like** him.
- When using the BE verb alone or as a helping verb, use *am/was* if the subject is *I*; use *is/was* if the subject is or can be replaced by *he*, *she*, or *it*; use *are/were* if the subject is or can be replaced by *we*, *they*, or *you*.
 - Example: **The candidate is** popular, but **his positions on most issues are** unclear.
 - Example: When **he was** a school principal, some of his **policies were** controversial.
- When using the HAVE verb alone or as a helping verb, use *has* if the subject is or can be replaced with *he*, *she*, or *it*; use *have* if the subject is or can be replaced by *I*, *you*, *we*, or *they*.
 - Example: **Jane has** no idea why **the meetings have** been cancelled.

Excerpted from: Subject-Verb Agreement: Exercise 1