

Subject and Verb Agreement

(1) **Number Agreement:** A singular subject takes a singular verb. A plural subject takes a plural verb.

Example: This radio has six preset buttons. (singular)

Example: Most radios have six preset buttons. (plural)

(2) **Person Agreement:** A subject should also agree in “person” (1st person perspective, etc.) with its subject.

Tip: This affects only 3rd person singular subjects in the present tense.

Example: He runs to the store.

Example: The table looks warped.

Tip: Non 3rd Person Singular Subjects

Example: I run to the store.

Example: We run to the store.

Tip: The verb “to be” is an auxiliary verb and has eight forms.

1. Present Tense: am, is, are

Example: I am hungry.

Example: She is hungry.

Example: We are hungry.

2. Past Tense: was, were

Example: I was hungry.

Example: We were hungry.

3. Infinitive, Past Participle & Present Participle: be, been, being

Example: He has yet to be identified.

Example: He had been mean to my sister.

Example: He was being mean to my sister.

Hint: An agreement problem can sometimes occur when the verb of a sentence precedes the subject.

Example: [Wrong] There was several writers waiting for their articles to be approved.

Example: [Right] There were several writers waiting for their articles to be approved.