

Nouns

A noun names a person, place, or thing. In a sentence, it answers the question “Who?” or “What?” It can be the subject of a sentence, but it can also be a direct object, an indirect object, or the object of a preposition.

Juan is coming with us. (Who is coming with us? Juan.)
 I ate a *mango*. (What did I eat? A mango.)
 We went up the *stairs*. (We went up what? The stairs.)

Proper and Common Nouns

A noun that names a particular person, place, or thing is a proper noun. It is capitalized. A noun that names a general, non-specific person, place, or thing is a common noun. It is not capitalized.

| Proper nouns: specific persons, places, things | Common nouns: non-specific persons, places, things |
|------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| <i>Pablo Neruda</i> | <i>poet</i> |
| <i>Albert Einstein</i> | <i>scientist</i> |
| <i>Yuba College</i> | <i>college</i> |
| <i>Mount Fuji</i> | <i>mountain</i> |
| <i>Pepsi</i> | <i>soda</i> |
| <i>Mustang</i> | <i>car</i> |

Singular and plural nouns

Most nouns are either singular (one) or plural (more than one). You make a singular noun plural by adding an –s or –es.

| Singular regular nouns | Plural regular nouns |
|------------------------|----------------------|
| <i>poet</i> | <i>poets</i> |
| <i>scientist</i> | <i>scientists</i> |
| <i>potato</i> | <i>potatoes</i> |
| <i>kiss</i> | <i>kisses</i> |

However, some plural nouns are irregular and do not follow this pattern.

| Singular irregular nouns | Plural irregular nouns |
|--------------------------|------------------------|
| <i>child</i> | <i>children</i> |
| <i>man</i> | <i>men</i> |
| <i>woman</i> | <i>women</i> |
| <i>person</i> | <i>people</i> |

Non-count nouns

Non-count nouns are almost never plural. No matter how much *electricity* or *furniture* you have, for example, you still call it *electricity* and *furniture*. Here are some common non-count nouns:

| | | | |
|-----------|-------------|-----------|--------|
| milk | electricity | money | advice |
| rice | water | furniture | bread |
| equipment | homework | ice | air |
| oxygen | weather | wool | heat |

Contributed by Rosemary McKeever

