

Cases where words can be left out

When expressions are joined by and, but or or, we often leave out repeated words or phrases of various kinds.

Study the following sentences

A knife and fork OR a knife and a fork

These boys and girls (More natural than these boys and these girls)

Ripe apples and oranges (More natural than 'ripe apples and ripe oranges')

She is ill but cheerful. OR She is ill but she is cheerful.

She likes mutton but hates chicken. (Instead of 'She likes mutton but she hates chicken')

The food and the drinks are ready. (Instead of 'The food is ready and the drinks are ready')

Note that when two verbs or objects are the same, it is not always the second that is left out.

I can and will go. (NOT I can go and will.)

Singular and plural

When one verb joins two singular subjects connected by and, a plural verb form is used.

My father and mother work in education. (NOT My father and mother works in education.)

When two singular subjects are connected by or, the verb is singular.

Either Jake or Steve has stolen the money.

Words are not usually left out after other conjunctions.

She was depressed because she didn't know what to do. (NOT She was depressed because didn't know what to do.)