

The label number refers to the grammatical category which relates to the number of countable objects in the world. In English, number is important with nouns. An English noun exhibits a two-way distinction of number: a singular form and a plural form.

The singular form denotes one of something. Examples are: tree, cat, flower, girl, boy etc.

The plural form denotes two or more of something. Examples are: trees, cats, flowers, girls, boys etc.

In English, a singular noun usually has no marking while the plural form carries the suffix -s or -es.

Cat / cats

Dog / dogs

Fox / foxes

Fruit / fruits

A few dozen nouns form their plurals irregularly. Examples are:

Child / children

Man / men

Woman / women

Foot / feet

Tooth / teeth

Mouse / mice

Nouns with only a singular form or only a plural form

Some nouns have only a singular form or only a plural form. Nouns which have only a singular form include the following: *furniture, wheat, happiness, scenery, news, information, luggage, bread, advice* etc.

Nouns which have only a plural form include the following: *police, cattle, oats, tweezers, pants, remains* etc.

Nouns with identical singular and plural forms

A few nouns in English have identical singular and plural forms. An example is sheep.

The sheep is hungry. (Sheep - singular)

The sheep are hungry. (Sheep - plural)