



# Countable Nouns

- can be **counted**
- have **singular** and **plural** forms.
- They are defined by **a/an**, **one** in the singular
- They are defined by **some**, **any**, **(a) few**, etc. in the plural.

## Plural Formation: Regular nouns

- Most nouns take **-s**:

*car-cars*

- Nouns ending in **-ch**, **-sh**, **-x**, **-s**, **-ss** take **-es**:

*watch-watches*

*fox-foxes*

*bus-buses*

- Nouns ending in **-f** or **-fe** form their plural in **-ves**:

*wolf-wolves, life-lives*

**But:** some nouns just take **-s** and some others form their plural in both ways:

*belief - beliefs,*

*roof - roofs,*

*safe - safes,*

*scarf- scarfs/scarves*

## Plural Formation: Regular nouns

- Nouns ending in **-o**, normally take **-es**:

*tomato-tomatoes*

**But:** nouns ending in vowel + o (e.g. radio), musical instruments (e.g. piano) and abbreviations (e.g. photo), take **-s**:

*radio-radios, piano-pianos, photo-photos*

- Nouns ending in **-y**, drop the **-y** and take **-ies**:

*library-libraries*

*Daily-dailies*

**But:** nouns ending in **vowel + -y**, take **-s**:

*boy-boys*

*tray-trays*

## Plural Formation: Irregular nouns

- Some nouns change completely in the plural:

*man - men*

*child - children*

*goose - geese*

*foot - feet*

*woman - women*

*ox - oxen*

*mouse - mice*

*tooth - teeth*

- Certain nouns are always in the plural form. These are:
  - *Arms* (= weapons), *clothes*, *contents*, *customs*, *goods*, *people*, *police*, *scales*, *stairs*, *surroundings* (=environment)
  - all nouns that consist of two parts: *binoculars*, *glasses*, *jeans*, *pliers*, *pyjamas*, *scissors*, *shorts*, *trousers*, etc.

With these nouns we often use **a pair of**.



- Some nouns of **Greek or Latin origin** form their plural by adding **Greek or Latin suffixes**:

*analysis - analyses*

*criterion - criteria*

*basis - bases*

*phenomenon - phenomena*

*crisis - crises*

*medium - media*

- Some nouns are the same in the singular and the plural form:

*deer - deer*

*species - species*

*sheep - sheep*

*series - series*

*fish - fish*

*aircraft - aircraft*

*salmon - salmon*

*means-means*

*crossroads - crossroads*

- Collective nouns describe groups of people: *audience, class, committee, crew, family, government, jury, staff*, etc.
- They take a **plural verb** if they refer to the members of the group individually
- They take a **singular verb** if the group is considered as a unit.

*My family are organising a trip to Italy.* (family = a group of individuals.)

*The government is thinking of increasing taxes.* (government = one unit.)

- Cardinal number + Noun + Noun

Number-noun noun

*a ten-pound note* (not a ten-pounds note)

*a three-year-old boy*

*A multi-storey building*