

Plural Noun Forms

Regular Plurals

1.-The plural form of most nouns is created simply by adding the letter 's' to the end of the word .

minute - minutes | horse - horses | bag - bags

2.-Nouns that end in **-ch, -x, -s, -sh, z or s-like** sounds, the plural is formed by adding 'es' to the end of the word.

church - churches | box - boxes | gas - gases | bush - bushes | ass - asses

3.-Nouns that end in a single -z, the plural is formed by adding 'zes' to the end of the word.

quiz - quizzes

4.-Most nouns ending in **-o** preceded by a consonant also form their plurals by adding 'es' .

potato - potatoes | tomato - tomatoes | volcano - volcanoes

5.-However many newly created words and words with a **Spanish or Italian origin that end in -o**

just add an 's'.

photo - photos | piano - pianos | portico - porticos

6.-Nouns ending in a **consonant + y**, drop the y and add '**ies**'.

party - parties | lady - ladies

7.-Most nouns ending in **-f or -fe**, drop the **f** and add '**ves**'.

calf - calves | half - halves | wolf - wolves

8.-Most words ending in **-is**, drop the -is and add **-es**.

crisis - crises | hypothesis - hypotheses | oasis - oases

Irregular Plurals

Many common nouns connected with **human beings** seem to be irregular.

child - children person - people man - men woman - women

Other irregular common nouns are: **foot - feet mouse - mice tooth – teeth louse-lice**

Some nouns have identical plural and singular form:

aircraft - aircraft fish - fish headquarters - headquarters sheep - sheep species - species

Uncountable nouns on the other hand have no plural form and take a singular verb (is / was ...).

advice information luggage news

Some nouns (especially those associated **with two things**) exist only in the **plural form and take a plural verb** (are / were...)

cattle scissors trousers congratulations pyjamas

Nouns that stem from **older forms of English** or are of foreign origin often have odd plurals.

ox - oxen index - indices or indexes

Words ending in -us

Linguists can argue for hours about the plural ending of nouns ending in -us. Many of these words are loanwords from Latin and preserve their Latin plural form, replacing **the -us suffix with -i**, but of course not all words ending in -us have a Latin origin, and some Latin words ending in -us were not pluralized with -i. hence the argument.

The English plural of *virus* is *viruses*, not *viri*.

Other Latin loanwords that take the regular English plural -es ending include

campus - campuses bonus - bonuses

Latin loanwords that take a -i plural ending include

radius - radii alumnus - alumni

Note - Some nouns just create controversy. Did you know that the proper plural spelling for **roof is *rooves*** and not the more common *roofs*?