

CHEAT SHEET – Subject Verb Agreement

When should we use a plural verb

A subject and verb should always agree.

The subject is the person/thing doing the action (verb).

In the present tense:

- a singular subject, use a singular verb (ends in s)
- a plural subject, use a plural verb (does NOT end in s)

In the future tense:

- a plural subject is always used (does NOT end in s)

Common singular subjects

it
this
someone
passenger
operator
driver
TfL

Common singular verbs

- | | | |
|------------|-----------|-------------|
| • is | • has | • does |
| • gives | • makes | • gets |
| • goes | • offers | • needs |
| • shows | • tells | • expects |
| • puts | • causes | • allows |
| • keeps | • says | • applies |
| • provides | • follows | • increases |
| • reduces | • stays | |

Common plural subjects

you
we
they
passengers
drivers
police
PHVs

Common plural verbs

- | | | |
|-----------|----------|------------|
| • are | • have | • do |
| • give | • make | • get |
| • go | • offer | • need |
| • show | • tell | • expect |
| • put | • cause | • allow |
| • keep | • say | • apply |
| • provide | • follow | • increase |
| • reduce | • stay | • |

Example 1

✓ A passenger needs

✗ A passenger need

Here the subject is 'a passenger'. Since it is singular, it needs a singular verb (s at the end). So the correct verb is 'needs' and NOT 'need'.

✓ Passengers need

✗ Passengers needs

Here the subject is 'passengers'. Since it is plural, it needs a plural verb (no s at the end) so the correct verb is 'need' and NOT 'needs'.

Example 2

✓ This includes

✗ This include

Here 'This' refers to singular subject, so it needs a singular verb (s at the end), so the correct verb is 'includes' and NOT 'include'.

✓ These include

✗ These includes

Here 'These' refers to a plural subject, so it needs a plural verb (no s at the end), so the correct verb is 'include' and NOT 'includes'.

Example 3

✓ This section tells

✗ This section tell

Here 'This section' is a singular subject, so it needs a singular verb (s at the end), so the correct verb is 'tells' and NOT 'tell'.

✓ You should tell

✗ You should tells

In English grammar 'You' is a plural subject (even though you are one person, it is not singular) so it needs a plural verb (no s at the end), so the correct verb is 'tell' and NOT 'tells'.