



## Nouns

### Overview:

A noun is a person, place, or thing, and often becomes the subject or object of a sentence. When a noun acts as the subject, it performs the action in the sentence. On the other hand, when a noun acts as the object, it receives the action in the sentence. Nouns have specific classifications, and they can be either singular or plural.

### Proper Nouns and Common Nouns

Proper nouns name particular people, places, or things, and thus are usually capitalized. Common nouns name non-specific people, places, or things. For example, *Sally* is a noun that names a specific person. *Sally* is also a *girl*, yet *girl* does not specifically name who *Sally* is. Proper nouns also stand alone in a sentence without the use of a **determiner**, whereas common nouns often require a determiner's assistance. You would not say, for example, "*The Sally* drank coffee," but you could say, "*The girl* drank coffee." Review additional handouts for more information on when to use **articles** and **determiners**.

<b>Proper Noun</b> = <i>Max</i>	<b>Common Noun</b> = <i>dog</i>	<b>Proper Noun</b> = <i>May</i>	<b>Common Noun</b> = <i>month</i>
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### Concrete Nouns and Abstract Nouns

Concrete nouns name things that can be tasted, touched, seen, heard, or smelled. In other words, these nouns can be experienced with one or more of the five senses. Abstract nouns name concepts, beliefs, ideas, or qualities. *Pizza* is something that can be touched, seen, tasted, and smelled; therefore, *pizza* is a concrete noun. *Feminism* cannot be experienced by any of the senses, so *feminism* is an abstract noun.

<b>Concrete Nouns</b> = <i>cell phone, basketball, pencil</i>	<b>Abstract Nouns</b> = <i>harmony, bravery, sadness</i>
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### Count and Non-Count Nouns

Count nouns are nouns that can be counted (*five students, three papers, nine desks*); non-count nouns are nouns that cannot be counted (*beauty, information, homework, happiness*). Simply put, non-count nouns cannot be made plural by adding an *-s* to the end of the word, and only have a singular form.

**Note:** you'll notice that some non-count nouns are also abstract such as *beauty* and *happiness* above.

### Confusing Nouns

It's important to know whether a noun (the antecedent) is plural or singular so that the following noun (the pronoun) matches it. This can often get confusing as some nouns are singular but can easily be mistaken for plural nouns. Thus, the pronouns that follow them must be in the singular form (it, her/him, etc.). Below is a list of nouns that are singular but commonly mistaken for plural nouns.

each	each one	everyone	everybody	anybody
anyone	someone	somebody	nobody	no one
neither	either	the group/team		

## Collective Nouns

Collective nouns name a group of something, which in most cases happen to be people. For example, *team* is a collective noun that is comprised of a group of people who play the same sport or work together as a group. Other examples of collective nouns are *family*, *class*, *faculty*, and *public*.

### Style Matters:

Understanding the difference between the types of nouns will also help you understand other elements of sentence structure, like when to use articles. Look at your own writing and try circling all the nouns in one paragraph. Are all the proper nouns capitalized? Can you tell the difference between a concrete noun and an abstract noun?