

## RULES FOR WRITING THE PLURAL OF NOUNS

**1. The regular way to form the plural of a noun is to add -s**

EXAMPLES      girl, girls      task, tasks

**2. The plural of nouns ending in *s*, *x*, *z*, *ch*, or *sh* is formed by adding -es**

EXAMPLES      moss, mosses      birch, birches  
                    wax, waxes      dish, dishes

**3. The plural of nouns ending in *y* preceded by a consonant is formed by changing the *y* to *i* and adding -es**

EXAMPLES      lady, ladies      guppy, guppies

**4. The plural of nouns ending in *y* preceded by a vowel is formed by adding -s**

EXAMPLES      toy, toys      journey, journeys

**5. The plural of most nouns ending in *f* is formed by adding -s. The plural of some nouns ending in *f* or *fe* is formed by changing the *f* to *v* and adding -s or -es**

EXAMPLES      Add -s:  
                    gulf, gulfs      belief, beliefs  
                    Change *f* to *v* and add -s:  
                    knife, knives      life, lives  
                    Change *f* to *v* and add -es  
                    half, halves      thief, thieves  
                    loaf, loaves      wolf, wolves

**6. The plural of nouns ending in *o* preceded by a vowel is formed by adding -s; the plural of nouns ending in *o* preceded by a consonant is formed by adding -es**

EXAMPLES      *o* preceded by a vowel - add -s:  
                    patio, patios      ratio, ratios  
                    *o* preceded by a consonant - add -es:  
                    veto, vetoes      hero, heroes  
EXCEPTIONS      Eskimo, Eskimos      silo, silos

## **RULES FOR WRITING THE PLURAL OF NOUNS**

### **7. The plural of a few nouns is formed in irregular ways**

EXAMPLES      child, children      mouse, mice ox, oxen  
                    woman, women      foot, feet              tooth, teeth

### **8. The plural of compound nouns consisting of a noun plus a modifier is formed by making the modified noun plural.**

EXAMPLES      sister-in-law, sisters-in-law  
                    coat-of-arms, coats-of-arms  
                    Chief of State, Chiefs of State  
                    editor in chief, editors in chief

### **9. The plural of a few compound nouns is formed in irregular ways**

EXAMPLES      eight-year-old, eight-year-olds  
                    tie-up, tie-ups  
                    drive-in, drive-ins

### **10. Some nouns are the same in the singular and the plural.**

EXAMPLES      deer, sheep, salmon, Sioux

### **11. The plural of numbers, letters, signs, and words referred to as words is formed by adding an apostrophe and -s.**

EXAMPLES      1800, 1800's  
                    B, B's  
                    &, &'s