

## CONCORD

= agreement (between different grammatical elements); one of the units displays a particular feature (e.g. plurality) that accords with a displayed feature in the other (e.g. concord: 3<sup>rd</sup> person number between S and P)

- a sg. S requires a sg. V  
*The change in male attitudes is most obvious in industry.*
- a pl. S requires a pl. V  
*The changes in male attitude are most obvious in industry.*

In a complex NP, you have to determine the HW to know which number to use with the verb.

A clause demands a sg. predicator:

- [How you got there] **doesn't** concern me.
- [To treat them as hostages] **is** criminal.
- [Smoking cigarettes] **is** dangerous to your health.

pP and adverbs functioning as S demand a sg. verb:

- [In the evenings] **is** best for me.
- [Slowly] **does** it!

Nominal relative clauses (on the continuum from clause to noun phrase) - number depends on the interpretation of the number of the wh-elements (determiners what and whatever) - the number of the determined noun:

- [What were supposed to be new proposals] **were** in fact modifications of earlier ones.
- [What was once a palace] **is** now a pile of rubble.
- [Whatever book a Times reviewer praises] **sells** well.

A tendency in informal speech for is/was to follow there in existential sentences:  
There's hundreds of people on the waiting list. \* (in writing)

Interrogative who/what as S - sg. predicator even when plurality is expected as the answer:

- Who **is** making all that noise? The Brown children.
- Who **have not** received their passes? (possible only if the pl. S is expected as an answer)

Plural phrases (including coordinate phrases) - sg. if they are as names, title, quotations etc.:

- predicator is normally sg. because the interpretation is sg.  
Crime and Punishment **is** a good book, but The Brothers Karamazov **is** undoubtedly a masterpiece.
- titles of some works (collections of stories), either sg. or pl.  
The Canterbury Tales **is/are** ...

## PRINCIPLES OF GRAMMATICAL CONCORD (P AGREES WITH S IN NUMBER), NOTIONAL CONCORD AND THE RULE OF PROXIMITY

**Notional concord** = agreement of P with S according to the notion of number rather than with the actual presence of the grammatical marker for that notion (e.g. collective nouns in English):

The government **have** broken all **their** promises.  
The government **has** broken all **its** promises.

**Proximity** (= attraction) - agreement of the P with a closely preceding NP in preference to agreement with the head of the noun phrase that functions as S:

No one except his own **supporters** **agree** with him. (the proximity principle is here reinforced by notional concord - only his own supporters agree with him)

Conflict between grammatical concord and attraction through proximity - increases with the distance between the HW of the NP of the S and the P (lengthy PostMs, an adverbial intervening between the S and the P) - proximity concord is unplanned. In writing - corrected to grammatical concord.

Concord causes problems where the S contains:

- a collective noun HW,
- coordination,
- an indefinite expression.

**Notional concord** - sg. used with S that are pl. NPs of quantity or measure (= a single unit):

Sixty people means a huge party.

- **coordinated S = coordination with and**
- a S consists of two or more NP (or clauses) coordinated by and - a distinction between coordination and coordinative apposition.
- **coordination** = cases that correspond to fuller coordinate forms - pl. P used even if each conjoin is sg.  
Tom and Alice **are** now ready. (Tom is now ready AND Alice is now ready)  
What I say and what I think **are** my own affair.
- **pl. P is required in asyndetic** (no conjunction) **coordination** (without a coordinator)  
His camera, his radio, his money **were** confiscated by the customs officials. (conjunction is only implied)
- **conjoins expressing a mutual relationship** even though they can only indirectly be treated as reductions of clauses in this way, also take a pl. verb  
Your problem and mine **are** similar. (Your problem is similar to mine AND mine is similar to yours)
- **a sg. NP followed by etc. and similar abbreviatory expressions** (and so on, and so forth) - pl. predicator
- **preposed each and every** - a distributive effect - sg. predicator  
Every adult and every child **was** holding a flag.  
Each senator and congressman **was** allocated two seats.

CF. Each of them has signed the petition. vs. They have each signed the petition.

- **coordination within a sg. S**

sg. uncount. noun head premodified by phrases coordinated by and functioning as S - it may imply two (or more) separate sentences - pl. predicator

American and Dutch beer are (both) much lighter than British beer. (Am. beer is ... and Dutch beer is ... - 2 sorts/types)

Beer from America and Holland is much lighter than British beer. (reversed word order, no and in preM)

- **nominal relative clause as S** - coordination reduction allows some variation in number interpretation

What I say and do are my own affair. (What I say is ... and what I do is ...)

What I say and do is my own affair. (What which I say and do is ...)

- **generic NP with a sg. count. head** - pl. predicator when the head is premodified and the preM contains coordination by and

A first-language and a second-language learner **share** some strategies ...

The short-term and (the) long-term loan are handled very differently by the bank. (we can also pluralize the noun; very common in Eng.)

### COORDINATIVE APPOSITION (additional info.) = S

No reduction implied - each of the coor. units has the same reference - sg. P required if each NP is sg.

This temple of ugliness and memorial to Victorian bad taste **was** erected in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

CF. This aged servant and the subsequent editor of his collected papers **was** (1 person only)/**were** (2 different people) by his deathbed.

### QUASI-COORDINATION/SEMI-COORDINATION

Coordinators that are not pure conjunctions, can also function as prepositions (along with, rather than, as well as). Grammatical concord required a sg. P if the first NP is sg.

The captain, as well as the other players, **was** tired.

**BUT** The players, as well as the captain, **were** tired.

### COORDINATION WITH OR AND NOR

The rules are different for subject phrases or clauses coordinated with (either ...) or = disjunctive

Either the Mayor or her deputy **is**/\***are** bound to come. (gram. concord)

What I think or what I say **is**/\***are** no business of yours. (gram. concord)

Either the strikers or the bosses **\*has**/**have** misunderstood the claim (gram. concord)

Either your brakes or your eyesight **is**/?**are** at fault. (proximity)

Either your eyesight or your brakes **are**/?**is** at fault. (proximity)

**neither ... nor** (Neither he nor his wife **has** arrived. (formal))