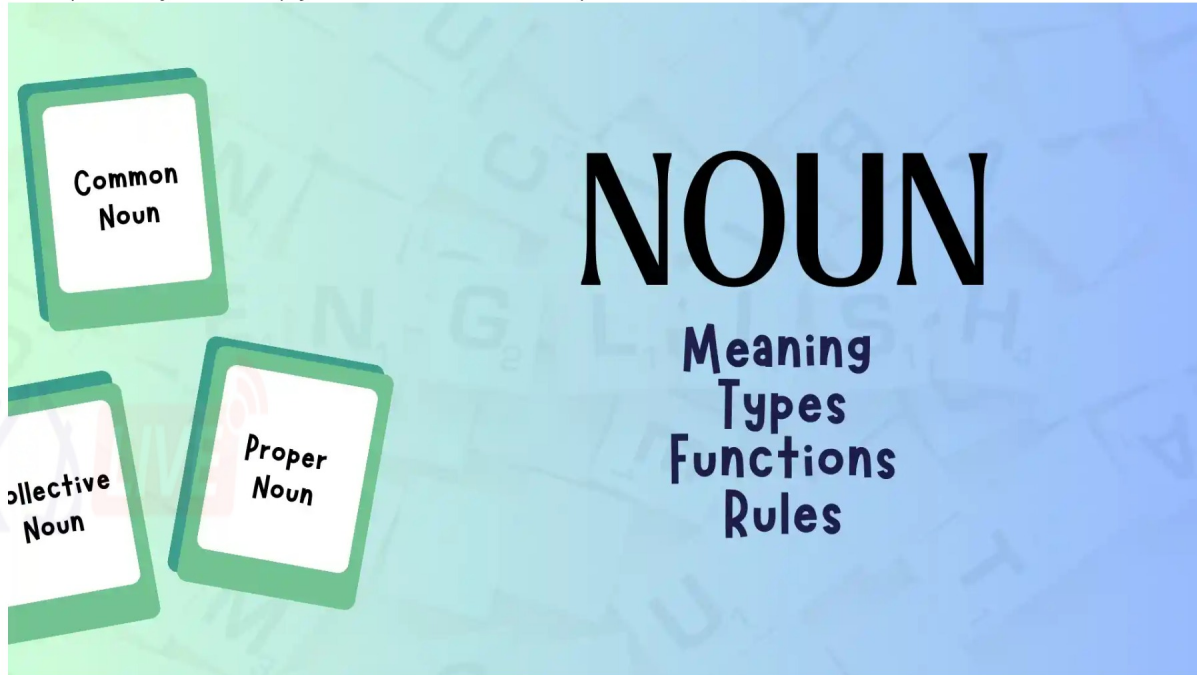


Noun - Definition, Types, Functions and Rules with Examples

Welcome to our blog on Nouns, an essential topic in English Grammar that plays a crucial role in all competitive exams. Approximately 3 - 4 questions certainly appear based on this topic, in the exam, making it imperative for you to grasp the concepts of Noun thoroughly and practice a variety of questions.

In this blog, we will comprehensively cover all the theoretical concepts and rules of this topic. Additionally, we have included many examples for you to deeply understand each concept and rule. So, let's dive into the world of Nouns and boost your exam preparation.



[Source: KD Live]

If you wish to score well in the English Language section of any competitive examination, it is imperative to master all the basic rules of English grammar. Nouns are an elementary part of grammar, and they are easy to understand. Let's start with the very basics and understand what nouns are, what their types are, and what rules they follow.

What are Nouns?

Simply put, a Noun is a word that is used to name a person, place, item, idea, etc. Take a look at the following examples of nouns:

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[Source: KD Live]

- 1.Name of a person - Rahul, Geeta etc.
- 2.Name of a place - Lucknow, Delhi, New York, etc.
- 3.Name of an animal species - Dog, Cat, Cow, etc.
- 4.Name of an object - Umbrella, Knife, Car, etc.
- 5.Name of a substance - Gold, Silver, etc.
- 6.Name of a Measure - Kilogram, Centimetre, etc.
- 7.Name of a Quality - Happiness, Sorrow, etc.

Hence, a noun is a word that is used to identify any class of people, places, or things, or to name a particular one of them.

Types of Nouns



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There are many kinds of nouns. Here, we will discuss 11 types of nouns along with examples of each type. The types of nouns are:

- Proper Noun
- Common Noun
- Collective Noun
- Compound Noun
- Abstract Noun
- Material Noun
- Countable Noun
- Uncountable Noun

Let's learn about each of these in detail.

Proper Noun

A proper noun denotes a specific name given to a person, place, animal etc.

For example, the name of a person is a proper noun. Let us take a look at a few examples to understand this better:

- Mehul loves eating cake.
- Radha is going to Delhi tomorrow.
- Meera's pet dog Ozzy has fallen ill.

In the above examples, the words Mehul, Radha, Delhi, Meera and Ozzy are proper nouns because they are names specifically used to denote one particular person, place, or animal.

Note: A proper noun always begins with a capital letter, regardless of where it is placed in a sentence.

For example: All students, except Tom, have passed the examination.

Here we have written Tom with a capital T even though it is not the first word of the sentence. This is because Tom is the name of a specific student and thus it is a proper noun.

Common Noun

A common noun is also known as Generic Noun. It is almost like the opposite of Proper Noun. If Proper noun is used to denote a specific person/place/thing, then a common noun is used to denote all persons/places/things belonging to the same class or same kind.



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Let us understand this with some examples:

- Ron and Dustin are best friends. Both the boys are always seen together.
- Our science teacher showed us a very interesting experiment.
- Do you like cats?

In the above examples the words boys, teacher and cats are common nouns. In the first example we can clearly see that Ron and Dustin are proper nouns because they are names of specific people. However, 'boys' is a common noun since it is a generic word and does not denote only one specific boy.

Similarly the word 'cats' can be used for all cats and the word 'teacher' can be used for all teachers. Thus, these two words are also common nouns.

Note: Generally we do not use an article before a proper noun. But sometimes a proper noun is used as a common noun. In this case, an article can be used before it.

For example: She is the Newton of our class.

Here the word 'Newton' is a proper noun (name of scientist), but is being used as a common noun (used to denote intelligent people). Hence, the article 'the' has been used before the proper noun 'Newton'.

Collective Noun

A collective noun is used when we want to name a group or collection of similar individuals as a whole. In other words, a collective noun is a word used to represent a group of people, animals, or things.

For example:

- A class of students
- A bunch of grapes
- A pride of lions

In the above examples the words 'class', 'bunch' and 'pride' are collective nouns. The word 'class' represents a collection or group of students, the word 'bunch' represents a group of grapes and the word 'pride' represents a group of lions.

From your examination point of view, it would be beneficial to learn a few collective nouns. Here is a list of some important collective nouns:



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Here is a list of some important collective nouns:

- An army of soldiers.
- An assembly of listeners.
- A band of musicians.
- A band of pilgrims.
- A bevy of ladies/girls/women.
- A class of students.
- A board of directors.
- A choir of singers.
- A company of boys.
- A crew of sailors.
- A crowd of people/spectators.
- The council of ministers.

A collective noun may be singular or plural. Let's understand this with the help of examples. A collective noun is a singular noun and is followed by a

singular verb if it is used as a single body or group.

For example: 'The family is living together in that house.'

In this example, family is being treated as a singular entity. A collective noun is used as a plural noun and is followed by a plural verb if they are used as individuals.

For example: 'The family were living in different houses.'

Here family is being treated as plural because we are talking about the individual members of the family.

Compound Noun

A compound noun refers to a noun that is made with two or more words. Most compound nouns are of the following format:- [noun + noun] or [adjective + noun].

Let's look at a few examples:

- Do you want to have breakfast together?
- It's a full moon night.

Here 'full moon' (full + moon) and 'breakfast' (break + fast) are compound nouns. Other words that are used as compound nouns are 'cat food', 'blackboard' etc.

Abstract Noun

A noun denoting an idea, quality, or state rather than a concrete object are known as Abstract nouns.



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For example, 'truth', 'danger', 'happiness'. Basically these are used to denote ideas etc. that are not tangible. Let's take a look at some examples:

- Honesty is the best policy.
- Creativity is an innate feeling.

In the above example 'honesty' and 'creativity' are abstract nouns because these are ideas/concepts that we can understand but we cannot touch.

Material Noun

Material nouns are names that are used to denote material, substance or things made up of something. Material nouns are not generally countable, which means we cannot count them because they are in the forms of liquid, semi-liquid or solid. Nouns in this class are materials like cloth, air, metal, gold, salt, iron, silver, etc.

Let's look at how these are used in sentences:

- My mom purchased a silk saree yesterday.
- That statue is made of gold.

In the above examples, 'gold' and 'silk' are names used to denote material and hence these are called material nouns.

Countable Noun

As the name suggests, countable nouns are used to denote those things that are countable and occur in both single and plural forms.

The nouns which can be modified by numerals are countable nouns. Simply put, if we can count something that comes under Countable Noun.

For example,

- There are 10 chairs in the house.
- Can you bring me two notebooks?

In the above examples, 'chairs' and 'notebooks' can be counted as 10 and 2 respectively. Hence, these can be considered as countable nouns.

Uncountable Noun

Again, as the name suggests, these are opposite of countable nouns. These are used to denote those things which cannot be counted. It cannot take the plural form. An uncountable noun is also known as mass nouns as we cannot count them.



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See these examples for better understanding:

- Can you bring me some water?
- There is milk in the fridge.

In the above examples, 'water' and 'milk' cannot be counted in numerals and hence these are called uncountable nouns.

Functions of Noun

Nouns can be used as a subject, a direct object, and an indirect object of a verb; as an object of a preposition; and as an adverb or adjective in sentences.

Nouns can also show possession.

1. **Subject:** The company is doing great. Roses are the 4 flowers of love.
2. **Direct object:** I finally bought a new mobile.
3. **Indirect object:** Max gave Carol another chocolate.
4. **Object of preposition:** Roses are the flowers of love.
5. **Adverb:** The train leaves today.
6. **Adjective:** The office building faces the mall.
7. **Possession:** The lion's cage is dangerous. My brother's daughter is adorable.

Note: English often uses nouns as adjectives - to modify other nouns.

For example, a car that people drive in races is a 'race car'. A car with extra power or speed is a 'sports car'.

Nouns that modify other nouns are called adjectival nouns or noun modifiers. For our purposes, they are called attributive nouns. So we will use that term.

Did you notice something unusual about the expressions with the noun car? A car used to race with other cars is a race car. Both nouns are singular. A car that has power and speed is a sports car. Why is the first noun, sports, plural? There is no rule about whether the attributive noun is singular or plural. Most of the time it is singular. But if the combination of nouns includes a plural noun, it usually stays that way. The result is phrases like ladies room - not lady room, for a room meant for women and girls, and bean soup but not beans soup for a soup made of beans.

Important Rules of Noun

RULE 1: Some nouns are always considered singular

- He gave me jewellery.(He gave me jewelleries.- INCORRECT)
- I have information for you.(I have informations for you. - INCORRECT)

Nouns such as information, machinery, stationery, furniture, abuse, fuel, rice, gram, issue, bedding, repair, news,mischief, poetry, business, economics, physics, mathematics, classic, ethics,athletics,innings, gallows, etc. are always considered singular.



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Practice Question: Find out which part of the sentence has an error and select the appropriate option. If a sentence is free from error, select 'No Error'. Children are prone (a) / to making mischiefs (b) / if they have (c) / nothing to do. (d) / No error (e)

A) a B) b C) c D) d E) No Error

Answer: Option B

Explanation: The correct noun would be 'mischief' and not mischiefs. The correct sentence will be 'Children are prone to making mischief if they have nothing to do.'

RULE 2: Some nouns are only used in plural form

- These scissors are rusted. (These scissors is rusted. - INCORRECT)
- Try these pants for size. (Try this pants for size. - INCORRECT)

The above examples show us that there are some nouns, which are only used in Plural Form. Also, these nouns always take Plural Verbs with them. Such nouns are: Spectacles, Tongs, pincers, scissors, goggles, gallows, fangs, alms, amends, trousers, pants, particulars, proceeds, regards, riches, savings, troops, thanks, braces, wages, belongings, etc.

Practice Question: Find out which option from the given options will replace the emboldened part given in the question.

If the emboldened part is free from error, select 'No improvement required'. She misplaced **her spectacle and is now** facing great difficulty in studying.

- A) her spectacles and is now
- B) her spectacle but is now
- C) her spectacles and are now
- D) her spectacles but is now
- E) No improvement required

Answer: Option A

Explanation: The correct noun would be **spectacles** and not **spectacle**. The correct sentence will be 'She misplaced **her spectacles and is now** facing great difficulty in studying.'

RULE 3: Some nouns look plural but are considered singular

- Economics is my forte. (Economics are my forte. - INCORRECT)
- Mathematics is a tough subject. (Mathematics are a tough subject. - INCORRECT) As you can see from the above examples, words like Mathematics, Politics, News, Physics, Economics, Athletics, Innings Etc. look plural but take a singular verb with them.

Practice Question: Find out which part of the sentence has an error and select the appropriate option. If a sentence is free from error, select 'No Error'. He is good (A) / in all subjects (B) / but his mathematics (C) / are weak. (D)

- A) He is good B) in all subjects
- C) but his mathematics D) are weak
- E) No Error

Answer: Option D

Explanation: The verb 'are' should be replaced with 'is'. This is because 'Mathematics' is a noun that is always considered singular even though it has an 's' and might seem plural. Hence it will take a singular verb. The correct sentence will be 'He is good in all subjects but his mathematics is weak.'



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RULE 4: Some compound nouns can be made plural by adding 's' or 'es' to the main word only In compound nouns such as Mother-in-law, Daughter-in-law, Commander-in-chief, we have to use 's' and 'es' with the main word only in order to make them plural. For example, we never say **Mother-in-laws**. Instead we say **Mothers-in-law**. Here 's' has been added to the main word 'mother'. Similarly it would be **Daughters-in-law** and not **Daughter-in-laws**, **Commanders-in-chief** and not **Commander-in-chiefs**.

Practice Question: Find out which option from the given options will replace the emboldened part given in the question. If the emboldened part is free from error, select 'No improvement required'. Why would **those command sergeant majors want** to talk to you?

- A) those command sergeants major want
- B) those command sergeant majors want
- C) the command sergeant majors want
- D) those command sergeant major want
- E) No improvement required

Answer: Option A

Explanation: The plural form of the verb 'sergeant major' is 'sergeants major' and not 'sergeant majors'. Hence, the correct sentence will be 'Why would **those command sergeants major want** to talk to you?'

RULE 5: Some nouns indicate length, measure, money, weight, or number but when they are preceded by a numeral, they remain unchanged in form.

- It is a two-year degree course. (It is a two - years degree course. - INCORRECT)
- Only Half an hour is left to finish this work. (Only Half an hour are left to finish this work. - INCORRECT)

The unit of measurement (such as - hour, pound, kilo, mile, etc.) is always used in the singular form. The structure is as follows- 'Half + a/an + unit of measurement'; for example, 'Half a kilo', 'Half an hour'



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RULE 6: Some nouns have different meanings in singular and plural forms In order to understand this, let's take a look at a few nouns in singular and plural form and see how the meaning changed.

Advice = counsel

Advices = information

Good = wise

Goods = property

Work = job

Works = compositions, factories

Authority = command

Authorities = persons in power

Iron = metal

Irons = fetters, chains

Force = strength

Forces = army

Content = satisfaction

Contents = things contained

Respect = regards

Respects = compliments

RULE 7: Material nouns do not take 'an/a' articles before them.

We cannot use the article 'a' or 'an' before a material noun because material nouns are uncountable. These articles usually represent a single unit. We know that uncountable nouns do not exist in units. Hence, we cannot use them before these nouns. This is a common error made by many, so you must keep this rule in mind.

• I take honey instead of sugar. (I take a honey instead of sugar. - INCORRECT)

• Olive oil is good for health. (An olive oil is good for health. - INCORRECT)

In the above examples, 'honey' and 'olive oil' are material nouns and hence it is incorrect to place an article before them. This brings us to the end of our discussion on nouns. We have discussed all the important details of this important aspect of English Grammar.

How was your experience reading through this article? Your opinions and participation are extremely valuable to us. So, kindly share your views in the comment section. For more such content to read and any kind of educational information, kindly visit KD Live.