1. **& B. Binary nouns (plural nouns)**

Binary nouns refer to objects that can be thought of as having two parts.  Although the noun takes a plural form, the object itself is a single entity.

Example: Joe always wears *sunglasses* because he thinks that they *make* him look cool.

Often these nouns are referred to as *a pair of* something.  In this case, the verb form is singular:

Example: This *pair of scissors isn't* very sharp.

Most binary nouns can be grouped as 1) tools or instruments;  2) articles of clothing worn on the lower half of the body;  or 3) optical lenses.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Sunglasses | goggles | scissors | leggings | pantyhose |
| binoculars | forceps | tweezers | overalls | shorts |
| glasses | pliers | jeans | pants | tights |

**Socks (plural, concrete, can be separatd)**

**Singular plural**

**Sock socks**

**A pair of socks pairs of socks**

**Trousers (plural, concrete, cannot be separated)**

**Singular Plural**

* **Trousers**

**A pair of trousers pairs of trousers**

Plural nouns

These shorts are too long.

This pair of scissors is not very sharp.

These pairs of scissors are not very sharp.

1. Words used in the plural form such as *foundations, premises, contents,* etc. give meanings that are different from those given by such words (used in the singular form). Consider, for example, the following:

He tipped the *contents* of the bag onto the table. (pl. noun—means things contained in sth)

Your tone of voice is as important as the *content* of what you have to say. (sing. Noun-- means the subject matter of sth).

*Premises, foundations, contents* are used with a plural verb.

1. Words marked with (s) such as economics, ethics, politics, gymnastics, measles and dominoes are uncountable nouns used with a singular verb. The following is an example:

**Mathematics** *is* the study of quantity, structure, space, and change.

Similarly, *news and spaghetti* (an Italian plural form) are uncountable nouns used with a singular verb**.**

What’s the latest news?

1. Some words such as series and means have the same form when used with a plural or singular verb. Consider, for example, the following:

"Means" is singular when referring to a particular strategy or method: The best means of securing the cooperation of the builders is to appeal to their self-interest. It is plural when it refers to a group of strategies or methods: The most effective means for dealing with the drug problem have generally been those suggested by the affected communities.

"Series" can be a singular or a plural noun, depending on its meaning. When it is used to refer to a single set of things, it takes a singular verb even if it is followed by the preposition of and a plural noun: A series of medical tests is planned for next week. When series refers to two or more sets of things, it takes a plural verb: Three series of medical tests are planned for next week.