Nouns

WHAT IS A NOUN?

A noun is a word that names a person, place, thing, or animal in a sentence. A noun can function as a subject, direct object, indirect object, subject complement, object complement, appositive, adjective, or adverb.

Noun Gender

In English, many nouns are not gender sensitive. Examples of some non-gender specific nouns include: **teacher**, **author**, **doctor**, or **nurse**. There are some nouns that can be gender specific. Examples of some gender-specific nouns include: **actor/actress**, **waiter/waitress**, or **steward/stewardess**.

Noun Plurals

One would pluralize a noun to indicate a number more than one. Most nouns change to form a plural by simply adding –s or –es to the end of a noun.

> Each grade has at least five **classes** because there are so many **students**.
> My neighbor has two **dogs**, and both like to run back and forth along the fence.

Note: Some nouns are pluralized in different ways. For example, nouns that end in "f" drop the "f" and add "ves," while nouns that end in "y" drop the "y" and add "ies."

> In the fall, I love to watch the **leaves** falling from the trees.
> Traveling has become Susan's new passion, and her goal now is to travel to as many **countries** as she is able.

Note: Some nouns are pluralized irregularly. Some examples of these are:

Mouse > Mice	**Die > Dice**
Goose > Geese	**Ox > Oxen**

Proper Nouns

Proper nouns are those that represent the name of a specific person, place, or thing. A proper noun is indicated by using a capital letter. Some examples of proper nouns are names of: people, cities, countries, days of the week, months, institutions, religions and their holy texts, and organizations.

> **Monmouth University** is located in **West Long Branch**, **New Jersey**.
> **President Bush** is the 43rd president of the **United States of America**.
> In 2000, **Christianity** was ranked the largest religion in the world.
> **June** is the most popular month for a wedding, whereas **July** is the most popular month in which to have a baby.

Common Nouns

A common noun is any noun that refers to a general person, place, or thing.

> The University begins **classes** on September 4, 2007.
> Make sure to watch for the **signs** that direct **traffic** in and out of the parking **lot**.
> It is important to do your **assignments** on time in order not to risk receiving a failing **grade** for the **class**.

Concrete Nouns

A concrete noun names something or someone that you can perceive through the use of your senses (taste, touch, smell, sight, or hearing.)

> The **dog** played with the red **ball** in the **grass**.
> Our **teacher** let us watch a **movie** at the end of the day.

Abstract Nouns

An abstract noun names anything which you *cannot* perceive through the use of your senses.

> **Justice** should be served when a criminal is found guilty.
> Our school prides itself on teaching **perseverance**, **integrity**, and **honesty**.

Collective Nouns

A collective noun is used when naming a group of things, animals, or persons. It is important to recognize when a collective noun is used (versus a singular noun) in order to maintain correct subject-verb agreement.

> The **class** was almost finished writing their essays when the bell rang.
> (Here "class" is singular because it indicates a group.)
>
> The **police** are a vital force in protecting the members of the community.
> (Here "police" is plural because it indicates many individuals.)

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