

Plural Nouns vs. Singular Ownership

Be sure to distinguish between a plural noun and a singular noun that owns something.

Both of the underlined words in the following numbered examples sound exactly alike, but they look different and they mean different things.

Do not confuse the two forms.

Plural Nouns

1. Many countries have large populations.
(plural of *country* – more than one)
2. All the babies were crying.
(plural of *baby* – more than one)
3. Many families go on vacation each year.
(plural of *family* – more than one)
4. The two armies met on the hillside.
(plural of *army* – more than one)
5. All the ladies in the audience applauded.
(plural of *lady* – more than one)

A Singular Noun Owns Something

1. My country's leader is elected by vote.
(One country “owns” its leader.)
2. The baby's rattle fell on the floor.
(The one baby owns the rattle.)
3. My family's house is on the corner.
(One family owns the house.)
4. The army's request for help was heard.
(One army owns the request.)
5. The man was wearing a lady's hat.
(The hat belongs to one lady.)