

Thanks, regards, premises ☆☆☆

(☆☆ = Basic ☆☆☆ = Intermediate ☆☆☆☆ = Advanced)

Grammar Bite

(read through this)

Always plural

Some nouns are always plural in English (they may not be plural in other languages).

Thanks (you can't have one thank)

Clothes (you can't have one clothe (but you can have *cloth*))

Also:

congratulations, contents, customs (tax), goods, heads (or tails), manners, remains, savings, stairs,

Plural but different in singular

Some of those nouns can also be singular, but then they mean something (very or slightly) different:

Regards ('greetings'); but *regard* ('respect')

Premises ('a building'); but *premise* ('a starting point in logic')

Wages ('weekly salary'); but also *the minimum wage*.

The tropics ('land near the equator'); but *the tropic of Cancer*.

Plural because they are natural pairs

Some words are plural because naturally come in pairs:
trousers, shorts, glasses, scissors...

Plural (-ics), with singular verbs

Words naming academic subjects often end in *-ics* but take singular verbs:

Economics is the study of money.

athletics, economics, ethics, gymnastics, linguistics, mathematics, phonetics, physics.

News (UNCOUNTABLE plus singular verb: *the news is good*)

Advanced (☆☆☆☆)

When a plural word is used as an ADJECTIVE, we usually lose the *-s*:

wage claim, trouser leg, scissor hands (in film "Edward Scissorhands")

However, if the singular noun has a different meaning, we keep the *-s* (this is also true of *"-ics"* words):

glasses case

phonetics course

arms race

athletics training

glass case

phonetic symbol

arm rest

athletic person

Worksheet

(do this)

Fill each blank with one of the words given:

-s -es Ø (nothing)

1 You've got one trouser ___ leg shorter than the other!

2 The premise ___ will be ready for occupation in three weeks.

3 The workers asked for a wage ___ increase again this year.

4 Good ___ imported illegally will be confiscated.

5 We have great regard ___ for her.

6 The table was littered with the remain ___ of lunch.

7 "Where are my glasses?" "In your glass ___ case, maybe?"

are is

8 "Our thanks ___ due to Ms Jones for all her help."

9 The news today ___ very worrying.

10 Phonetic symbols ___ commonly used in dictionaries.

11 Athletics ___ a great way to keep fit and healthy.

12 Shorts ___ sensible for football.

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