

1 Here's the Idea

▶ **A verb must agree with its subject in person and number.**

Cindy Brown is famous for scoring 974 points in the 1986–1987 NCAA women's Division I season.

Wanda Ford's 534 **rebounds were** the most ever collected in a single season.

Agreement in Person and Number

▶ **Singular subjects take singular verbs; plural subjects take plural verbs.**

The form of a verb also depends on the person of its subject.

| Forms of Verbs | | |
|----------------|------------------------|----------------------------|
| | Singular | Plural |
| First person | I excel | we excel |
| Second person | you excel | you excel |
| Third person | he/she/it/Cindy excels | they/Cindy and Wanda excel |

In the present tense of all verbs except *be*, the third-person singular form is the only form that differs from the base form. Add -s to create that form.

Even this rule has exceptions. You can remember them by thinking OY! To create the third-person singular form of

- a verb ending in **o**, add -es (do → does)
- a verb ending in **y**, change the *y* to *i* and add -es (try → tries)

For more information about spelling rules, see p. 640.

The forms of *be* are a special case.

| Forms of <i>Be</i> | | | | |
|----------------------|--------------|----------|---------------|-----------|
| | Present | | Past | |
| | Singular | Plural | Singular | Plural |
| First person | I am | we are | I was | we were |
| Second person | you are | you are | you were | you were |
| Third person | he/she/it is | they are | he/she/it was | they were |

Don't get confused! **Nouns** that end in s are usually plural. **Verbs** that end in s are usually singular.

For more information about singular and plural forms of nouns, see p. 6.

Words That Separate Subjects and Verbs

When the subject and verb in a sentence are separated by other words, mentally screen out those words and make the verb agree with the subject.

The individual scoring **title for 1967–1968, as well as those for 1968–1969 and 1969–1970, **was won** by Pete Maravich.**