

- **Singular and Plural**

This tutorial deals with the Singular and Plural form of words. Singular comes from the Latin *singuli*, one by one; plural comes from the Latin *plures*, more (than one).

A singular word is a word which refers to one thing or group of things. A plural word refers to more than one thing. When singular words become plural they change their spelling slightly to show the difference in their meaning. The way they change depends on what letter they end with in the singular.

There are three main ways of forming the plural in English:

1) add es or s to the singular; box - boxes, gas - gases, hero - heroes

2) change the vowel-sound; man - men, tooth - teeth, mouse - mice

3) add en ; ox - oxen

- **Words ending in 'Y'**

If there is a vowel before the 'y' you must add 's' to form the plural.

bay - bays, tray - trays, boy - boys, toy - toys, donkey - donkeys

If there is a consonant before the 'y' you must change the 'y' to 'i' and add 'es'. fly - flies, cry - cries, butterfly - butterflies, country - countries

- **Words ending in 'O'**

Most words ending in 'o' make their plural by adding 's' ; piano - pianos, radio - radios

Some words end in 'oes' in the plural ; buffalo - buffaloes, tomato - tomatoes

- **Words ending in 'f' 'fe' and 'ff'**

Most words drop the 'f' or 'fe', and add 'ves' in the plural; leaf - leaves, loaf - loaves. Some words just add 's' to form the plural; roof - roofs. Only a few words can be spelt either 'fs' or 'ves' ; turfs or turves, hoofs or hooves, scarfs or scarves, wharfs or wharves

- **Words that stay the same:**

There are in English several plural forms that are regarded and treated as singulars; sheep-sheep, deer-deer, aircraft-aircraft, salmon - salmon, gallows - gallows, shambles - shambles.

- **Words that change completely:**

Some words change their vowel-sound completely in the plural; mouse-mice, tooth-teeth, woman-women, man - men.

- **Words with hyphens:**

Hyphenated nouns add an 's' to the main noun part; son-in-law - sons-in-law

Where the nouns are formed from verbs, add an 's' on the end; lay-by - lay-bys

- **Latin words:**

Some words, which have kept their Latin form, take Latin plural endings; terminus -termini, formula -formulae, medium - media, axis - axes.