Subject-Verb Agreement

Remember:

1. With compound subjects joined by and, use a plural verb.

   **Incorrect:** The movement of the girl’s dress and the tossing of her hair *captivates* the boy.
   
   **Correct:** The movement of the girl’s dress and the tossing of her hair *captivate* the boy.

   **But when each or every precedes the compound subject, use a singular verb.**

   **Incorrect:** Every boy and girl are required to have parental permission.
   **Correct:** Every boy and girl *is* required to have parental permission.

2. With compound subjects joined by or or nor, make the verb agree with the subject nearer to the verb.

   **Incorrect:** Either Hamlet or Othello are going to be performed this year.
   **Correct:** Either Hamlet or Othello *is* going to be performed this year.

   **Incorrect:** Maria could not decide whether her math class or her two science classes *was* harder.
   **Correct:** Maria could not decide whether her math class or her two science classes *were* harder.

   **Incorrect:** Neither the clerks nor the assistant manager *were* watching the register.
   **Correct:** Neither the clerks nor the assistant manager *was* watching the register.

   **3. Each, either, neither, one, everybody, somebody, nobody, everyone, someone, and anyone** require singular verbs.

   **Incorrect:** Each of the team members *were* given a small replica of the championship trophy.
   **Correct:** Each of the team members *was* given a small replica of the championship trophy.

   **Incorrect:** Neither of the teachers are receiving tenure this year.
   **Correct:** Neither of the teachers *is* receiving tenure this year.
4. Quantitative words such as **some, half, all, part, most, and more** are singular and plural depending on the nouns to which they refer.

   **Correct:** All of the members were notified, and most have arrived.
   **Correct:** Most of the committee’s time was wasted in senseless debate.