

There Is, There Are - Singular and Plural Verbs

One thing that often confuses English language learners is when they should use there is or there are. This is one topic that is covered in a free online English course. In the course of the lesson, you will also realize that there is can become a contraction: there's. First of all you have to think of what you want to talk about in your sentence. "There is" refers to one person, place or thing and is used when speaking in singular terms. "There are" is plural and is used when speaking of more than one person, place or thing. The rules associated with using these words are: * "There is" is used for singular nouns * "There is" is used when talking about collective nouns or a noun used to denote a group * "There are" is always used for more than one or plural nouns. Using these rules, examples of sentences are: * There is a bird in the tree outside my window. (One bird) * There is a flock of birds flying overhead. (Flock is a collective noun for a group of birds) * There are many animals in the zoo. (Animals - a plural noun for more than one animal). When you learn these rules and can give examples of the sentences, you realize that you are also using the correct form of the verb. There is can be shortened to there's because of the use of the verb "is". Both "there is " and "there's' mean the same thing. This brief lesson is a shortened version of an online lesson and is an example of what you can learn when you take a free course in English. Just because it is free doesn't mean it isn't worthwhile. These courses are very comprehensive covering all aspects of the English language. They are not just for learning how to use proper English grammar when writing because they do incorporate the four components of listening, speaking, reading and writing into every lesson. Take a look at any one of the lessons to see that each one follows the same format. First there is a presentation of short realistic dialogues. You can read along as you listen to the speaker reading them in English. Then you can replay the audio and repeat the words and phrases after the speaker. At the bottom of this page there is a list of the key vocabulary and structures used in the dialogue, which is very useful because you can concentrate on learning the words one at a time. It is important to see and hear the words used in context though because this way you get a better grasp of the language, which is not possible when you learn words in isolation. The instruction offered on the structure is presented in clear and simple words along with examples of correct and incorrect sentence structure. Then two pages of grammar exercises follow in which you test yourself on what you have learned. There is also a page of exercises using dialogues so that you can see how well you can use the structure in common situations.

About the Author

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