



The **subject** is the noun or pronoun that the sentence is about.

Subject (subj.): The **simple subject** of the sentence is the noun or pronoun that the sentence is about. *Dickinson wrote poetry.* The **complete subject** includes the simple subject and all of its modifiers. **Subject pronouns** (*I, you, he, she, they, it, we, you, they*) can be sentence subjects, but **object pronouns** cannot; you cannot say *Him and her are friends*. Remember the pronoun rule: **A subject is a subject, and an object is an object.** *She and I took the same route home.* **Indefinite pronouns** are always singular subjects: *Everyone has a chance to win.*

Compound subject: A compound subject is a double subject. More than one noun or pronoun is used as a double subject of the same verb: ***Fish and turtles** are in the pond.* ***Hérons and cranes** waded among the reeds.* A compound subject joined by the coordinating conjunction *and* is considered plural and must take a plural verb: *Shelley **and** Byron **are** traveling.* A compound subject joined by the coordinating conjunction *or* is singular: *Shelley **or** Byron **is** traveling.* *He **or** she **has** a dog,* but *he **and** she **have** a dog.* Notice how logical this is. If Pollock and Krasner painted pictures, then two artists painted, but if Pollock or Krasner painted *Night Creatures*, then only one artist painted it. *And* is a plural conjunction, and *or* is a singular conjunction. Grammar is logical.

Punctuating compounds: We do not put a comma before a coordinating conjunction that joins two parts of speech. It is *Fish and turtles are in the pond*, **not** *Fish, and turtles are in the pond*. In other words, we do not break these compounds with commas; we want the two words connected, not separated.



The predicate is the verb and other words that are about the subject.

Predicate: The **predicate** is the side of the sentence that says something about the subject. The **simple predicate** is the verb: *Thoreau **went** to see his mother.* The **complete predicate** is everything that is said about the subject: *Thoreau **went to the cabin near the pond and lived simply.*** When we mention the predicate, we usually will mean the simple predicate.

Compound verb: The subject of a sentence may take a compound verb as its predicate. In her poem about hope, Emily Dickinson's famous declarative complex sentence contains a compound verb in the dependent clause: "'Hope' is the thing with feathers — / that **perches** in the soul — / **And sings** the tune without the words...." The subject *hope* has *perches* and *sings* as its compound verb. Notice that there is no comma in the compound verb.

