

Irregular Plurals

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Certain words do not follow the rules for regular plurals. You'll find some words with no plural form at all. Since there is no way to know which nouns have an irregular plural, you have to memorize them. Explore a few different types of irregular plural nouns without a plural form.

Non-Count Nouns

Non-Count nouns are used as collective nouns and have no plural form because they are assumed to be plural. Most abstract nouns are noncount nouns. A few examples of noncountable plural nouns include:

- hair
- grass
- mud
- dress (when referring to a style of dress, not when referring to a clothing item that hangs in your closet)

If you are talking about multiples of these irregular plurals, you cannot make them plural by adding an “s” or “es” to the end. Instead, you need to make them plural by adding a descriptive phrase.

- There are many different **styles of hair**.
- There are several **varieties of grass**.
- There are three different **kinds of mud**.
- The ancient people had a few types of **styles of dress**.

Unchanging Nouns

Certain other nouns have the same singular and plural form. A large number of animals happen to follow this rule. These examples will be spelled the same.

Singular	Plural
aircraft	aircraft
bass	bass
bison	bison
elk	elk

moose	moose
shrimp	shrimp
spacecraft	spacecraft
swine	swine
trout	trout

Irregular Plurals That Change Ending

In addition to non-count nouns and unchanging nouns, several types of irregular plurals follow a pattern in the English language. Explore examples of different endings and how they change, along with irregular plural nouns that change completely.

Nouns With -f or -fe Endings

For most nouns that end in "f" or "fe," you drop the "f" or "fe" and add "ves."

Singular	Plural
knife	knives
wife	wives
half	halves
loaf	loaves
calf	calves
life	lives

Exceptions to this rule include roof and proof, among others. These will get an "s" on the end, as in roofs and proofs.

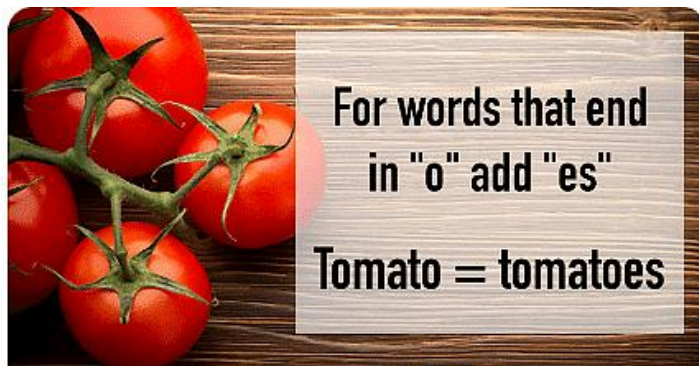
Nouns Ending in -us

For many words that end in "us," change the "us" to an "i" (especially if it **comes from a Latin word**). There are exceptions to this rule, and it's becoming more acceptable to add "es" instead of changing to "i" in some cases.

Singular	Plural
cactus	cacti
fungus	fungi
hippopotamus	hippopotami (hippopotamuses is acceptable)
octopus	octopi (octopuses is acceptable)
syllabus	syllabi

Nouns With -o Endings

For nouns that end in “o,” you add either “s” or “es.” Generally, most nouns ending in “o” just add “s” to make the plural, especially if there's a vowel before the final “o.” However, you'll also find words that work with both endings.



Singular	Plural
banjo	banjos or banjoes
flamingo	flamingos or flamingoes
potato	potatoes
studio	studios
tomato	tomatoes
zoo	zoos

Words With -is Endings

For many words that end in “is,” change the “is” to an “es.” Check out a few examples.

Singular	Plural
axis	axes
crisis	crises
hypothesis	hypotheses
oasis	oases
thesis	theses

Nouns With -um Endings

Nouns that end in “um” often become plural by changing “um” to “a.” See how this looks in action here.

Singular	Plural
bacterium	bacteria
curriculum	curricula
datum	data
medium	media
stratum	strata

Nouns With -ix Ending

Another irregular plural noun ending that changes is “ix.” In Greek and Latin words, this will change to “ces” or “xes.”

Singular	Plural
appendix	appendixes or appendices
crucifix	crucifixes
matrix	matrices or matrixes

Words that Change Form

Certain words do not add a letter to the end to become plural. Instead, these irregular plurals change the word itself. These words simply need to be memorized.

Singular	Plural
die	dice
foot	feet
goose	geese
man	men
mouse	mice
ox	oxen
person	people
tooth	teeth

Regular Plurals

Now that you've seen irregular plural nouns, it's important to review how regular plural nouns work. The general rule for making a noun plural is that if the word ends in "s," "x," "z," "ch" or "sh," add an "es." Review a few examples of what this might look like.

Singular	Plural
mess	messes
box	boxes
patch	patches
dish	dishes
buzz	buzzes

Add an S

For all other non-irregular nouns, simply add an "s" to the end of the word.

Singular	Plural
cat	cats
dog	dogs
yard	yards

Exceptions to Regular Plural Rules

An exception to the add an "es" rule is if the "ch" ending is pronounced with a /k/ sound, you add "s" rather than "es."

Singular	Plural
epoch	epochs
monarch	monarchs
stomach	stomachs

Vowel Endings

If the word ends in a consonant (all letters except a, e, i, o, u) plus "y," then change the "y" to an "i" and add the letters "es."

Singular	Plural
baby	babies
candy	candies
daisy	daisies