



## Spelling: Noun Plurals

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### Plurals of nouns can be created in the following ways:

(See our handout on Count and Non-Count Nouns at <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/esl/eslcount.html> for more information on nouns.)

1. Add an -s to form the plural of most words.
  - elephant--elephants
  - stereo--stereos
2. For words that end in a "hissing" sound (-s, -z, -x, -ch, -sh), add an -es to form the plural.
  - box--boxes
  - church--churches
3. If the word ends in a vowel plus -y (-ay, -ey, -iy, -oy, -uy), add an -s to the word.
  - tray--trays
  - key--keys
4. If the word ends in a consonant plus -y, change the -y into -ie and add an -s to form the plural.
  - enemy--enemies
  - baby--babies
5. For words that end in -is, change the -is to -es to make the plural form.
  - synopsis--synopses
  - thesis--theses
6. Some words that end in -f or -fe have plurals that end in -ves.
  - knife--knives
  - self--selves
7. The plurals of words ending in -o are formed by either adding -s or by adding -es. The plurals of many words can be formed **either** way. To determine whether a particular word ends in -s or -es (or if the word can be spelled either way), check your dictionary or the list below. There are two helpful rules:
  - a. All words that end in a vowel plus -o (-ao, -eo, -io, -oo, -uo) have plurals that end in just -s:
    - stereo--stereos
    - studio--studios
    - duo--duos
  - b. All musical terms ending in -o have plurals ending in just -s.
    - piano--pianos
    - cello--cellos
    - solo--solos
  - c. Plural forms of words ending in -o:

-os	-oes	-os or -oes
albinos	echoes	avocados/oes
armadillos	embargoes	buffaloes/os
autos	heroes	cargoes/os
bravos	potatoes	desperadoes/os
brancos	tomatoes	dodoes/os
cantos	torpedoes	dominoes/os
casinos	vetoos	ghettos/oes
combos		grottoes/os
gazebos		hoboes/os
infernos		innuendoes/os
kimonos		lassos/oes
logos		mangoes/os
maraschinos		mosquitoes/os
ponchos		mottoes/os
sombreros		mulattos/oes
tacos		noes/os
torsos		palmettos/oes
tobaccos		peccadilloes/os
typos		tornadoes/os
		volcanoes/os

**If you are unsure of how to make a noun plural, you can look up the singular form of the noun in a dictionary to get the plural form.**

Source: Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary

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The following information must remain intact on every handout printed for distribution.

This page is located at <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/print/grammar/spelnoun.html>.

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