



NDA/NA ENGLISH MASTERY SERIES

MODULE 01

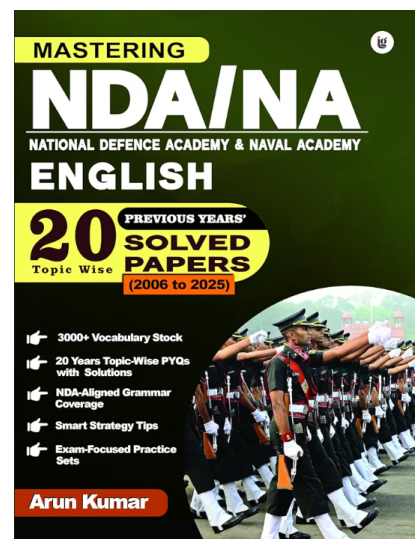
Noun

Core noun concepts, rules, common errors and practice sets.

From the book

MASTERING NDA/NA ENGLISH

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➤ Definition of a Noun

A noun is a word that names a person, place, thing, animal, idea, or abstract concept. It can function as the subject or object of a sentence, or it can be used in other grammatical roles.

Examples:

- **Person:** Rahul, teacher, doctor
- **Place:** India, Delhi, school
- **Thing:** book, table, car
- **Animal:** dog, elephant, tiger
- **Idea/Concept:** love, freedom, honesty

Nouns are essential for constructing meaningful sentences. For instance, in the sentence, "The dog barked loudly," dog is a noun that acts as the subject.

➤ Types of Nouns

Nouns are classified into several categories based on their characteristics. Understanding these types is crucial for solving questions in competitive exams. Below is a detailed breakdown of the types of nouns:

1. Proper Nouns

A Proper Noun is the name of a specific person, place, organization, or thing.

Characteristics:

They are unique and specific (e.g., *Mahatma Gandhi*, not just *man*).

- They always start with a capital letter.
- They do not usually take articles (*a*, *an*, *the*), except when needed for clarity or emphasis (e.g., *The United Nations*, *The Ganges*).
- They do not take plural forms in most cases.

Example Sentence:

- Sachin Tendulkar is a cricket legend.

2. Common Nouns

Common nouns refer to general, non-specific persons, places, things, or animals. They do not begin with a capital letter unless they start a sentence.

Characteristics:

- They are generic and not unique.
- They can be used with articles (*a*, *an*, *the*).

Examples:

- Persons: man, student, doctor
- Places: city, park, school
- Things: chair, phone, book

Example Sentence:

- The book on the table is mine.

3. Collective Nouns

Collective nouns refer to a group of individuals or things considered as a single unit.

Characteristics:

- They can take singular or plural verbs depending on the context.
- Singular verb: When the group acts as a single unit.
- Plural verb: When the members of the group act individually.

Examples:

- Group of people: team, crowd, family
- Group of animals: herd, flock, pack
- Group of things: bunch, collection, set

Example Sentences:

- The team *is* playing well. (Singular verb, acting as a unit)
- The team *are* arguing among themselves. (Plural verb, acting individually)

Note: Questions on collective nouns often test subject-verb agreement.

4. Abstract Nouns

Abstract nouns name intangible things, such as ideas, feelings, qualities, or concepts that cannot be touched or seen.

Characteristics:

- They are not physical entities.

| Noun |

- They are often derived from adjectives or verbs (e.g., happy → happiness, know → knowledge).

Examples:

- Feelings: love, anger, joy
- Qualities: honesty, bravery, beauty
- Concepts: freedom, justice, time

Example Sentence:

- Happiness is the key to a fulfilling life.

5. Material Nouns

Material nouns refer to substances or materials from which things are made. They denote matter that can be measured or weighed but not counted.

Characteristics:

- Material nouns are generally uncountable and take singular verbs.
- They do not usually take 'a/an' before them.
- They are not pluralized (we say gold, not golds).

Examples:

- Metals: gold, silver, iron, copper
- Liquids: water, milk, oil, juice
- Natural substances: wood, cotton, wool, clay
- Food materials: rice, sugar, bread, cheese

6. Concrete Nouns

Concrete nouns refer to tangible, physical things that can be seen, touched, or sensed.

Characteristics:

- They are perceptible by the senses.
- They contrast with abstract nouns.

Examples:

- Objects: table, car, apple
- People: boy, teacher, nurse
- Animals: cat, elephant, bird

Example Sentence:

- The **car** sped by quickly.

7. Countable Nouns

Countable nouns refer to things that can be counted and have both singular and plural forms.

➤ Number of Nouns

Nouns can be singular or plural, and understanding their forms is critical for subject-verb agreement and sentence construction.

Singular Nouns

A singular noun refers to one person, place, thing, or idea.

Examples:

- A **dog** is barking.
- The **city** is beautiful.

Plural Nouns

A plural noun refers to more than one person, place, thing, or idea. Plural forms are usually created by adding **-s**, **-es**, or other endings.

➤ Rules for Forming Plural Nouns:

Characteristics:

- They can be used with numbers and quantifiers (e.g., one, many, few).
- They take plural forms (e.g., book → books).

Examples:

- Singular: pen, chair, dog
- Plural: pens, chairs, dogs

Example Sentence:

- I have two cats.

Note: Questions often test the correct use of singular/plural forms and quantifiers.

8. Uncountable Nouns

Uncountable nouns refer to things that cannot be counted individually and do not have a plural form.

Characteristics:

- They are often substances, concepts, or masses.
- They take singular verbs and are used with quantifiers like much, some, or a lot of.

Examples:

- Substances: water, rice, sugar
- Concepts: advice, information, knowledge
- Abstract ideas: fun, luggage, furniture

Example Sentence:

- I need some water to drink.

9. Compound Nouns

Compound nouns are formed by combining two or more words to create a single noun.

Characteristics:

- They can be written as one word, separate words, or hyphenated.
- They function as a single unit.

Examples:

- One word: toothbrush, classroom
- Separate words: post office, bus stop
- Hyphenated: mother-in-law, check-in

Example Sentence:

- The bus stop is crowded today.

| Noun |

1. Add -s: For most nouns (e.g., book → books, pen → pens).
2. Add -es: For nouns ending in -s, -sh, -ch, -x, or -z (e.g., bus → buses, watch → watches).
3. Change -y to -ies: For nouns ending in a consonant + -y (e.g., city → cities, baby → babies).
4. Change -f or -fe to -ves: For some nouns (e.g., leaf → leaves, knife → knives).
5. Irregular plurals: Some nouns have unique plural forms (e.g., man → men, child → children).
6. No change: Some nouns remain the same in singular and plural (e.g., sheep, deer).

Examples:

- Regular: cat → cats, box → boxes
- Irregular: mouse → mice, foot → feet

Note: Questions on plural forms are common in sentence correction and fill-in-the-blank exercises.

➤ Gender of Nouns

In English Grammar, nouns can be classified by gender, especially when referring to people or animals. This is important for pronoun agreement and vocabulary questions.

➤ Types of Gender

1. Masculine: Refers to male beings (e.g., king, father, lion).
2. Feminine: Refers to female beings (e.g., queen, mother, lioness).
3. Common: Refers to beings that can be male or female (e.g., teacher, student, child).
4. Neuter: Refers to inanimate or non-gendered things (e.g., table, book, idea).

Note: Gender-based questions often test correct pronoun usage (e.g., he/she/it).

➤ Case of Nouns

Nouns change form depending on their grammatical function in a sentence. This is known as the case of a noun. While English does not have extensive case systems like some languages, the following cases are relevant:

1. Nominative Case: The noun acts as the subject of the sentence.
 - Example: John plays football.
2. Objective Case: The noun acts as the object of a verb or preposition.
 - Example: I gave the book to Mary.
3. Possessive Case: The noun shows ownership, usually formed by adding 's or ' .
 - Example: This is Ravi's pen.

Rules for Possessive Case:

- Add 's to singular nouns (e.g., dog → dog's).
- Add ' to plural nouns ending in -s (e.g., dogs → dogs').
- Add 's to plural nouns not ending in -s (e.g., children → children's).

➤ Rules for Using Nouns

To use nouns correctly, follow these rules, which are frequently tested in competitive exams:

1. **Subject-Verb Agreement:**
 - Singular nouns take singular verbs (e.g., The boy *is* running).
 - Plural nouns take plural verbs (e.g., The boys *are* running).
2. **Article Usage:**
 - Use *a* or *an* with singular countable nouns (e.g., a book, an apple).
 - Use **the** for specific nouns (e.g., the sun).
 - Do not use articles with uncountable nouns unless specific (e.g., water vs. the water in the glass).
3. **Uncountable Nouns:**
 - Do not use *a/an* or plural forms with uncountable nouns (e.g., incorrect: an advice; correct: some advice).
 - Use quantifiers like much, little, some, or any.
4. **Collective Nouns:**
 - Use singular verbs when the group acts as a unit (e.g., The committee *has* decided).
 - Use plural verbs when the members act individually (e.g., The committee *are* divided).
5. **Proper Noun Capitalization:**
 - Always capitalize proper nouns (e.g., *India*, not india).

| Noun |

6. Possessive Forms:

- Ensure correct use of 's or ' based on singular/plural forms.

➤ Common Mistakes with Nouns

Here are some frequent errors students make with nouns, along with corrections:

- Incorrect Plural Forms:**
 - Incorrect: childs, sheeps
 - Correct: children, sheep
- Wrong use of Articles:**
 - Incorrect: I have a information.
 - Correct: I have some information.
- Subject-Verb Agreement Errors:**
 - Incorrect: The team are playing. (If acting as a unit)
 - Correct: The team is playing.
- Improper Capitalization:**
 - Incorrect: i visited delhi.
 - Correct: I visited Delhi.
- Incorrect Possessive Forms:**
 - Incorrect: The dogs' bone's.
 - Correct: The dogs' bone.

➤ Singular and Plural Forms (Latin/Greek Origin Nouns)

PLURAL	SINGULAR
Bacteria	Bacterium
Fungi	Fungus
Alumni	Alumnus
Alumnae	Alumna
Data	Datum
Media	Medium
Criteria	Criterion
Phenomena	Phenomenon
Stimuli	Stimulus
Nuclei	Nucleus
Radii	Radius
Syllabi	Syllabus
Analyses	Analysis
Bases	Basis
Theses	Thesis
Hypotheses	Hypothesis
Appendices	Appendix
Indices	Index
Matrices	Matrix
Vertebrae	Vertebra
Larvae	Larva
Antennae	Antenna

PLURAL	SINGULAR
Antennas	Antenna
Corpora	Corpus
Genera	Genus
Formulae / Formulas	Formula
Memoranda	Memorandum
Automata	Automaton
Stigmata	Stigma
Strata	Stratum
Aegises	Aegis
Focuses / Foci	Focus
Cacti	Cactus
Algae	Alga
Diagnoses	Diagnosis
Ellipses	Ellipsis
Oases	Oasis
Paparazzi	Paparazzo
Schemata	Schema
Neuroses	Neurosis
Crises	Crisis
Axes	Axis
Taboos	Taboo
Viruses	Virus

➤ Classification of English Nouns by Number

CATEGORY	NOUNS
Always Singular	Advice, Furniture, Information, Knowledge, Luggage, Baggage, Equipment, Machinery, News, Poetry, Music, Research, Progress, Weather, Honesty, Patience, Scenery, Traffic, Wealth, Evidence, Luck, Slang, Vocabulary, Wages (When Means Consequence)
Always Plural	Clothes, Pants, Trousers, Jeans, Shorts, Pajamas, Glasses, Spectacles, Scissors, Binoculars, Tongs, Pliers, Scales, Savings, Earnings, Wages, Belongings, Surroundings, Outskirts, Premises, Riches, Remains, Thanks, Congratulations, Fireworks, Odds, Valuables, Ashes, Gentry, Peasantry
Singular and Plural in Same Form	Deer, Fish, Sheep, Aircraft, Spacecraft, Series, Species, Headquarters, Crossroads, Means, Offspring, Carp, Elk, Shrimp, Swine, Grouse Antelope

Notes:

| Noun |

1. **Always Singular:** Uncountable nouns like "water" or "furniture" cannot be pluralized directly but can be quantified with words like "bottle of" or "piece of." Some nouns (e.g., "news") look plural but are singular in usage (e.g., "The news is good").
2. **Always Plural:** These nouns often describe items with two parts (e.g., "scissors") or collective ideas (e.g., "savings"). They always take plural verbs (e.g., "The trousers are new").
3. **Singular and Plural in Same Form:** These are often animal names or terms where the form doesn't change regardless of number. The verb or context clarifies the number (e.g., "The fish is swimming" vs. "The fish are swimming").

Practice Set: Noun

Directions: Each sentence contains an error/ errors in the use of nouns related to number (singular/plural), countability, collective noun agreement, or irregular forms (e.g., phenomenon/phenomena, alumnus/alumni). Identify the incorrect noun or verb agreement and correct it.

Practice Set 1

1. All the latest equipments, including computers and microscopes, have been installed in the new laboratory to facilitate advanced research.
2. Despite his best efforts and continuous practice, his knowledges of the subject remained inadequate to crack the competitive exam.
3. The scientist's findings were based on datas collected over a span of ten years from various regions across the globe.
4. Each of the candidates have submitted his certificates, biodata, and identity proof as instructed in the circular.
5. The father-in-laws of the newlyweds played a major role in organising the event, which was attended by over 500 guests.
6. He gave me an advice which proved to be very helpful during the crisis.
7. The sceneries captured in her paintings reflect a deep emotional attachment with the places she once visited in her childhood.
8. The government has implemented several new policy aimed at increasing foreign investment in the healthcare sector.
9. Neither the employees nor the manager was aware that such informations were being leaked to external sources.
10. The advice given by the psychologist were intended to help the patients deal with anxiety and depression more effectively.
11. The books on the top shelf belongs to my cousin sisters who are visiting us from Canada for their summer vacation.
12. It is not unusual these days to find alumnis of Indian universities heading global corporations in diverse sectors.
13. The principal and the chairman of the college has issued a joint statement denying all allegations of mismanagement.
14. The datasheet, which includes all relevant statistics and figures, need to be reviewed thoroughly before submission.
15. She has not only won several trophy for her university, but has also represented her country in international tournaments.
16. The poetries of Keats, with its romantic imagery and musical rhythm, remains a source of inspiration for literature enthusiasts.
17. The committee were unanimous in its decision to reward the volunteers for their tireless effort and dedication.
18. The woman who lost her luggages during the flight was later compensated by the airline without any legal proceedings.
19. Every citizens should be made aware of their rights and duties under the constitution through regular educational campaigns.
20. One should not misuse one's freedom, nor should they infringe upon others' liberties in the name of self-expression.
21. The latest news from the region suggest that the peace talks between both countries are likely to resume soon.
22. The herd of deer were spotted grazing in the meadows, completely unaware of the presence of nearby predators.
23. My brother-in-laws, who live in different states, have all come together for our grandfather's 80th birthday celebration.
24. This furniture is imported from Italy, and the artisanship displayed in these pieces are truly remarkable.
25. A large number of people has gathered at the rally to protest against the policy changes announced by the ministry.

Practice Set 2

1. The manager, along with his assistants, were asked to submit the reports that had been pending for several weeks.
2. The scissors that lies on the table near the window belong to the tailor.
3. I shall not attend the ceremony since I have many works ot complete .
4. The information provided in these documents are sufficient to proceed with the application.
5. She is among those rare authors whose works commands international recognition despite limited publicity.
6. The news of his resignation have shocked not only his supporters but also his opponents.
7. The cattle was seen running wildly across the highway, causing a major traffic disruption.

| Noun |

8. The verdict of the jury, which were supposed to be unanimous, led to a retrial of the case.
9. Despite his efforts, the results of the experiments remains inconclusive and contradictory.
10. The police has issued several notices but no action has been taken so far by the residents.
11. The lose of bag was reported to the Principal.
12. While crossing the street, a fleet of taxis were seen speeding through the signal without stopping.
13. The criteria he mentioned for the selection of candidates seems arbitrary and unclear to most applicants.
14. The alumni of the college has organized a cultural evening to commemorate the golden jubilee.
15. He is one of the few students who has been selected for the scholarship by the university.
16. Either the principal or the teachers has to address the concern raised by the parents.
17. The poultry in the backyard, which includes hens and ducks is fed thrice every day.
18. These binoculars is very useful when observing birds from a distance during early mornings.
19. The wages of the factory workers has been increased due to inflation and labor protests.
20. A pair of trousers were lying on the sofa when the guests entered the living room.
21. The riches of the landlord was confiscated by the authorities after the fraud came to light.
22. The hero and patriot have finally been honored with a national award for his bravery.
23. Much efforts were made to resolve the issue before the deadline set by the committee.
24. The belongings of the traveler was found abandoned at the railway station platform.
25. The committee was divided in their views, and so no final decision could be announced.

Answers & Explanations

Practice Set 1:

1. Error: Equipments
Explanation: equipments" is incorrect. *Equipment* is always uncountable, so takes singular verb.
2. Error: "knowledges."
Explanation: "Knowledge" is uncountable.
3. Error: Datas
Explanation: *Data* is an uncountable noun and does not take a plural form like *datas*.
When referring to information or facts collected, we always say data (not *datas*)
4. Error: "Have"
Explanation: "Each" is singular, needs "has."
5. Error: "Father-in-laws,"
Explanation: Plural is "fathers-in-law."
6. Error: An
Explanation: Advice is uncountable and is singular.
7. Error: "Sceneries,"
Explanation: "Scenery" is uncountable.
8. Error: "Policy,"
Explanation: "Several" needs "policies." Singular "investment" and "healthcare sector" are standard.
9. Error: "informations."
Explanation: "Information" is uncountable so takes singular verb.
10. Error: "Were."
Explanation: "Advice" is uncountable, singular, needs "was."
11. Error: "Belongs," "cousin sisters."
Explanation: "Cousins" is standard.
12. Error: "Alumnis."
Explanation: Plural is "alumni"; "alumnis" is incorrect.
13. Error: "Has."
Explanation: Compound subject is plural, needs "have."
14. Error: "Need."
Explanation: Singular "datasheet" needs "needs."
15. Error: "Trophy."
Explanation: "Several" requires plural "trophies."
16. Error: "Poetries"
Explanation: "Poetry" is uncountable and needs.
17. Error: were
Explanation: Singular "committee" as a unit needs "was,"
18. Error: "Luggages."
Explanation: "Luggage" is uncountable.
19. Error: "Citizens."
Explanation: "Every" is singular, needs "citizen."
20. Error: "They."
Explanation: "They" should be replaced with "one" for consistency with singular pronoun.
21. Error: "Suggest"
Explanation: Singular "news" needs "suggests."
22. Error: "Were."
Explanation: Singular "herd" needs "was."
23. Error: "Brother-in-laws."
Explanation: Plural is "brothers-in-law."
24. Error: "Are."
Explanation: 'artisanship' needs singular "is."

| Noun |

25. Error: "Has."
Explanation: Plural "a large number of people" needs "have."

Practice Set 2

1. Error: *were asked* → was asked
Explanation: The subject is "The manager," which is singular.
2. Error: *lies* → lie
Explanation: "Scissors" is a plural noun, it takes a plural verb.
3. Error: many works
Explanation: work' is uncountable and does not take plural. Replace 'many' with 'much'
4. Error: *are* → is
Explanation: "Information" is an uncountable noun and takes singular verb.
5. Error: *commands* → command
Explanation: Relative pronoun "whose" refers to "authors" (plural); verb should be plural.
6. Error: *have* → has
Explanation: "News" is uncountable and takes singular verb.
7. Error: *was* → were
Explanation: "Cattle" is a plural noun and requires plural verb.
8. Error: *were* → was
Explanation: "Verdict" is singular; it takes a singular verb.
9. Error: *remains* → remain
Explanation: Subject "results" is plural.
10. Error: *has* → have
Explanation: "Police" is a plural noun; requires plural verb.
11. Error: "lose"
Correction: "loss"
12. Correct: were--was
Explanation: "Fleet" is collective noun and will take singular verb when treated as a unit.
13. Error: *seems* → seem
Explanation: "Criteria" is plural of "criterion"; verb must be plural.
14. Error: *has* → have
Explanation: "Alumni" is plural; correct verb is "have."
15. Error: *has* → have
Explanation: "One of the few students who have..." – verb agrees with "students," not "one."
16. Error: *has* → have
Explanation: With "either...or," verb agrees with the nearest subject ("teachers," plural).
17. Error: *is* → are
Explanation: "Poultry" is always plural.
18. Error: *is* → are
Explanation: "Binoculars" is plural in form and meaning; requires plural verb.
19. Error: *has* → have
Explanation: "Wages" is plural here; it takes plural verb.
20. Error: *were* → was
Explanation: "A pair of trousers" is treated as singular.
21. Error: *was* → were
Explanation: "Riches" is plural; use plural verb.
22. Error: *have* → has
Explanation: Article "the" used only once—refers to same person; singular verb required.
23. Error: *Much* → Many
Explanation: "Efforts" is countable; use "many."
24. Error: *was* → were
Explanation: "Belongings" is always plural.
25. Error: *was* → were
Explanation: "Committee" is a collective noun; if treated as a unit, and if divided it is plural.