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Hello, Previously I had the impression that a period of time is usually regarded as a singular or uncountable thing, so the verb followed is "-s" in most cases, eg. is/ has/ does/etc. But recently, I find a question posted on the net for language learners whose answer only allows "have passed/elapsed" after "ten years", without "has passed" being listed as a possible answer. So I wonder if "has passed" cannot follow "ten years"? Or is the answer given to the question not complete. Thank you. So I wonder if "has passed" cannot follow "ten years"? Or is the answer given to the question not complete. The noun "time" is not countable, but its units of measure are. You must use a plural form of the verb with days, years, months, etc. Elisabetta Hi. In this case we're talking about ten units of time (years), so the noun is plural. On the other hand, 'a period of ten years' is a single unit. I would definitely use a singular in "Ten days/weeks/months/years is a long time to wait." If "ten years" really means "a period of ten years" then I'm happy with a singular: "After ten years has passed you can apply for possession of the land". But if you want to emphasise the cycle of time, then "have" sounds better.Ten years have passed - ten long, lonely years - since Bill died at sea. If you want to emphasis the Thank you all, esp. Bioche. Your example has reminded me of sth that I could not recall a few minutes before. Though my puzzle has not been fully resolved, I know some usages concerning a period of time, know better about where to use "the third person singular verb form" or otherwise. Thank you. But the rule still seems a little bit arbitrary to me. I think I understand now. Because I recall that in the very beginning, we are taught this structure "There are 12 months in one year." Brioche brings up a good point, but in the example "Ten years is a long time" we're using a linking verb and subject complement rather than a verb that expresses action. That is, a plural noun is simply being modified by an adjective. I would definitely use a singular in "Ten days/weeks/months/years is a long time to wait." Excellent point that I had forgotten! If "ten years" really means "a period of ten years" then I'm happy with a singular: "After ten years has passed you can apply for possession of the land". Hmmm... in this context, the singular verb continues to sound odd to me. Elisabetta Well, we could change the entire ball game and use 'An arduous ten years has passed.' "Ten years" can be either singular or plural, depending on what is meant:'After ten years has passed you can apply for possession of the land.' [a ten-year period]'After ten years have passed you can apply for possession of the land.'"Ten years" as a plural seems a longer time (ten years passing, one by one) than "ten years" as a singular (a ten-year period). To me "arduous" draws out the time, and makes "ten years" less workable as a singular:'A short ten years has brought us to this point.''"An arduous ten years have passed.'" "Ten years" by itself would not need an article since it has a number, but when modified (by "short" or "arduous"), it does need the "an". "An" in such a construction does not make it singular:'A mere ten people were present for the ceremony.'" I agree with Brioche and Forero: "ten years" can be singular, meaning "a period of ten years", and therefore used with a singular verb. A google search on "years has passed"/"years have passed" suggests that the plural version is more common. Hello everybody I have some problems when I want to say that something needs to be increased/decreased several times. I don't want to use "six,seven-fold" or something like that. I know that we can say it using "one, two, three, four times". But the problem is that I don't know how to say it correctly if I, for example, want to say "The incomes in the country decreased by eight times" or "You have to increase the capacity of that device by four times". And hence I have one more question: what we have when saying "by X times"? What would be the difference if we said that without "by", just "increased/decreased X times"?Thank you. Unfortunately English is ambiguous in this respect, People argue about it. Everyone thinks it's obvious that 'four times bigger' means X and 'four times as big' means Y, but they disagree about X and Y. If the budget was 1000 and it increased (by) eight times, or by a factor of eight, or by a factor of eight, is it now 8000 or 9000? We have previous threads about this, though I'm not sure how you would find them. Thank you. But is what I suggested correct? I mean my two sentences, "Decreased by 8 times" doesn't mean anything to me at all. "Decreased to an eighth of its former size or amount" is precise, and perhaps that's what some muddle-headed innumerate meant by "decreased by 8 times," but I don't know, and I wouldn't trust the writer's arithmetic. Sometimes I read "decreased by" over 100%, which would produce a negative number as far as I can understand, but sometimes that's impossible.I think the best thing to do in these cases is to provide both numbers and let the reader draw his own conclusion about the relationship between them. Just say, "increased from 6 to 48" or "decreased from 48 to 6" and either leave it at that or, if you must give a proportion, add it. "From 1950 to 2000, the country's gross national product increased eight times, from 6 billion flinds* to 48 billion flinds." "The war years were an economic disaster. The gross national product fell from its prewar level of 48 billion flinds to 6 billion flinds."*The country's unit of currency is the flind of 100 urthers. Thank you too. But there's still a problem. What if I need to say: "You have to increase the capacity of that device by four times"? Or is it better to say that sentence using "fourfold"? I don't think "fourfold" is used much currently in AE; I don't know about BE. I've seen x-fold in older written material, but I especially wouldn't expect to see it in technical material. If you are dealing with engineers, "by four times" ought to mean " 4" and you should be all right. If you are not, and the people you are speaking to might think "by four times" means to add an amount that is 4 the base amount (making the new total five times the base), then you had better say "to four times its current level" and give the numbers.Example: "Increase the capacity of the pump from 400 cc/min to 1600 cc/min."That's probably what the engineers would want anyway. Be specific and let them do their own math. If therecan someone tell me what expression I should use in two weeks' weeks' or week's time? Thank you The weeks are plural (there are two of them), so it should be in two weeks' time. ok thank you but I don't undersand why the apostrophe is used In two weeks' time If you can believe it, the time belongs to the weeks. That's interesting. I was always under the impression that ... 's or ...'s translated to "is" (or are) Adding an "S" without an apostrophe makes it plural. I guess what I mean is, I would have thought in two weeks' time' would have been correct. Vicky Re: in two weeks/weeks' time/weeks time Thank you for your answers.Funny, in my book (Handbuch des englischen Sprachgebrauchs - it is mainly written in German) it says with a plural construction you can use it with or without the apostroph (examples from the book)In five minutes/minutes' time (days/days') In singular constructions the apostroph is necessary (again examples from the book):In a week's/month's/year's time Source The above is a quote from someone else's thread. It is the possessive form of 's.The weeks hold the time.The time belonging to the two weeks. I'm not 100% positive, but I think that German text is wrong. Perhaps what the text of the book really means is that you can say: In two weeks. orIn two weeks' time. I just put that in to quote the other part. It is not my quote. It is that of another member. That's interesting. I was always under the impression that ... 's or ...'s translated to "is" (or are) Adding an "S" without an apostrophe makes it plural. It wouldn't be "he's wasting Linda's time." It's "he's wasting Linda's time." The "s" is a contraction of "is" in things like "it's, there's, he's". If in doubt, check some reference sites.HERE for BE.HERE for AE. They agree - one week's time, two weeks' time. Both sources are listed in the sticky thread at the top of this forum.For more general discussion about apostrophes and possessives, please look up possessive in the WR dictionary. Last edited: Nov 11, 2011 I thought we were being asked where the apostrophe went, not whether it was mandatory. I think we need to help it, because we say in one week's time - never in one week time. This means we need the possessive apostrophe for two weeks too - i.e. two weeks' time, the correct form is "in two weeks' time" because that's a possessive one. So, as far as I know, it's " s " "s" concerning kasik's question I'd like to get an explanation for that if anyone can help Fascinating discussion, but why even use the word time in the expression? Wouldn't in two weeks convey the meaning? Can week(s) be anything but time? I realise this is a very old thread but had to respond... There is a world of difference. If I say "I will complete the task in 2 weeks" I could be saying that the task will take 2 weeks (and I could schedule it to be completed in a year's time). On the other hand if I say "I will complete the task in 2 weeks' time" the task itself may take only one hour, but I am committing to have it done two weeks from now. So the meanings are entirely different. If I were to say, Im going to Teds house I could also say, Im going to Teds. Right?So does that mean I could also say, Ill do it in 2 weeks meaning, of course, that Ill do it in 2 weeks time. Hi everybody, We can tell the time this way:It's one fifteen.It's one twenty.But:It's one oh five.When to add "oh"?I am wondering whether it's one oh ten or one ten -: Last edited by a moderator: Jan 12, 2017 Not where I come from. "One apple, some oranges, and a loaf of bread" is always plural."There's" is an alternative way, in speech, to say "there are", but "there is" is not: I agree that the whole sentence would sound better starting with "There's"... "But where I come from, it sounds odd to start a sentence with "There are one apple, [and any number of other things]". As it evidently does to nzfauna (post #3). Last edited: Jan 11, 2017 Not where I come from. "One apple, some oranges, and a loaf of bread" is always plural. "There's" is an alternative way, in speech, to say "there are", but "there is" is not:One apple, some oranges, and a loaf of bread are on the table.One apple, some oranges, and a loaf of bread is on the table.There are one apple, some oranges, and a loaf of bread is on the table.There are one apple, some oranges, and a loaf of bread on the table.Edited at posters request, to remove extraneous 'are'. Cagney, moderator > My BE ear agrees with Forero's s and s, but in practice I think I would rephrase most of the sentences (though in fact in some cases I'd use "there's" instead); There are some oranges, an apple, and a loaf of bread on the table.There were never any oranges, apples, or loaves of bread on the table.When there doesn't seem to be any particular reason for the order of items in a list, one is free to rearrange them to eliminate any awkwardness. How to Understand the 4 Carbons of Electric IBM TypewritersThis is a professional issue. Can any professional explain it? Where did you come across the phrase using at least four carbons on my electric IBM. Lht011230Please tell us the source, and give us some context, including the complete sentence in which the phrase appears. Instead of my original idea from the age of eight, when I read The Wizard of Oz, to become a Great Author, I ended up as a Long letter Writer, using at least four carbons on my electric IBM. The text is derived from a manuscript. Carbon here means a sheet of carbon paper (this meaning is listed in the dictionary- did you see it?)Someone using four sheets of carbon paper on a typewriter is typing an original and 4 copies of a document. No. It refers to carbon film ribbon - the replacement for inked fabric ribbon. That would make more sense but its the first time Ive seen carbon used in that way. I called them cartridges or spools. What exactly is a carbon?Can you give a more uniform and correct answer? It's four carbon film typewriter ribbons. The carbons are the ribbons used in the typewriter. If you write a lot, you use a lot of ribbons. I also first thought of carbon paper, but that would make four copies of one page, which was difficult (you probably don't remember using carbon paper), and is not writing a lot of pages. Just making many copies of each page. A carbon here stands for "carbon paper sheet." IBM typewriter was also just an electric typewriter. (I had a SHARP) Also, IBM (not necessarily IBM only) typewriter (also teletype) was an old input-output device used to enter commands for and print results from old "room-size" computers, like IBM Mainframe, PDP-11 and such. Eventually they were supplanted by displays and printers. The ribbon was used for the primary copy, but if one wanted to print multiples at once, carbon paper sheets would be used in addition to, placed between the additional sheets of paper. So if one wanted 5 copies, 4 sheets of carbon would be used.PS. We did not call the ribbons "carbons". The carbon is a sheet, and the ribbon is a spool-wound ink tape. Last edited: Apr 29, 2025 It doesn't seem to fit the "long letter writer" idea.Perhaps if we knew what document the text is derived from, we could get a little more context. I agree. Lht011230, can you please tell us the source of this text, when it was written, and when the narrative takes place?I took "electric IBM" to mean an electric typewriter made by IBM. Sorry, this is just a manuscript that cannot be found online and is not convenient for publication A carbon here stands for "carbon paper sheet." No, you're probably wrong in this context.Wiki shows that those carbon ribbons were introduced by IBM Selectric typewriters. I've never used an electric typewriter myself, so I only know the old ink ribbons, but a Google search shows that some people called those things "carbon ribbon". The IBM Selectric typewriter required ribbons of polymer (plastic) tape and popularized their use, even with other manufacturers. This type of ribbon is sometimes called a "carbon ribbon". IBM (not necessarily IBM) typewriter (also teletype) was an old input-output device used to enter commands for and print results from old "room-size" computers, like IBM Mainframe, PDP-11 and such. Eventually they were supplanted by displays and printers. A typewriter is not a teletype nor an input device for a computer. Back in the day, IBM made regular office typewriters (they were rather expensive compared to typewriters for home use). The Selectic models were the gold standard of regular office typewriters. Some of them used a regular ribbon on spools, but most of them used a special ribbon that came in cartridges. I learned to type on an IBM Selectric (a model II, I think) and have used them in an office setting back in the early 1980s. We just called the ribbons "ribbons" at the time. Until today, I had no idea there was anything "carbon" about them. four carbons means four ribbons? Is it right? That's what we're arguing about. Four ribbons, or four sheets of carbon paper for duplicating? It is not entirely clear. A typewriter is not a teletype nor an input device for a computer. Back in the day, IBM made regular office typewriters (they were rather expensive compared to typewriters for home use). The Selectic models were the gold standard of regular office typewriters. Some of them used a regular ribbon on spools, but most of them used a special ribbon that came in cartridges. I learned to type on an IBM Selectric (a model II, I think) and have used them in an office setting back in the early 1980s. We just called the ribbons "ribbons" at the time. Until today, I had no idea there was anything "carbon" about them. Yes, I also added that. Should've earlier. I typed my resumes on a Sharp typewriter (the ribbon/daisy wheel type) in 1990s.But if I wanted more than one copy, I used carbon sheets. The bottom line is, regardless of whether we've heard "carbons" used with that meaning or not: four ribbons makes sense in the context: four pages of carbon paper doesn't. In the era of carbon paper and carbon ribbons, if a person were to write the same letter to four or five people, they'd ideally use a stack of five pieces of paper alternating with four sheets of carbon paper.If they are writing long letters ("I ended up as a Long letter Writer") then they wouldn't be making four copies of one letter, they'd be writing several pages each of many letters. = carbon ribbons. four carbons means four ribbons? Is it right? That seems to be the case, though it would be quite helpful if you could reveal whether the source is British or American and what time the author is writing about. One ribbon is supposed to be able to type about 10,000 characters which would be around 1500 words or more. 6000 words would be quite a long letter - about 20 pages double-spaced. I would agree 4 ribbons makes sense as he had to use this much tape to write his "long letters."But they are not carbons. I wonder if the author is a native English speaker. I can only speak for American English, but "four carbons on my electric IBM" is not what I (a native AmE speaker who typed a lot of pages on an IBM Selectric II) would have said about the large amount of typing I did on a particular brand of typewriter. Another explanation (other than the author not being a native speaker, and short of this expression allowed in BE) could be, the author simply forgot the terminology. (After all, electric IBM Model 1 typewriter started selling in 1935. Their products were IBM until transferred to Lexmark in 1991; I remember it very well. By this time they had ball and later daisy wheel typewriters).So, it could be vaguely remembered that there was some carbon something, carbon copies. So his memory served him with "carbons" for what should've been "tapes." Last edited: Apr 29, 2025 Or maybe it was a local abbreviation. Languages work in mysterious ways. Could be too. In the context (now that we have it) it seems to have been eventually understood by most (as we can observe here) as "typewriter ribbon", but "carbon" had been confusing me for some time. Now I wonder not only about the author's native language but also about the author's age. I can well imagine that someone born in 1990 would have only a vague knowledge of ribbons and carbon paper and typewriters. Now I wonder not only about the author's native language but also about the author's age. I can well imagine that someone born in 1990 would have only a vague knowledge of ribbons and carbon paper and typewriters. Lemme surprise ya Royal typewriterMore Amazon Electric Typewriters I am not sure who and why uses these today, buy obviously they do.And as you can see from these links' customer reviews, those are not one-time buys of used equipment. Now I wonder not only about the author's native language but also about the author's age. I can well imagine that someone born in 1990 would have only a vague knowledge of ribbons and carbon paper and typewriters. Lht011230: Could you at least provide this much context? English is spoken around the world and there are variations. I remember my grampa had a real suitcase Erika. He still used it in 70-s.After I bought that Sharp typewriter (paid \$100 which I did not have), while I was working in a computer repair shop on Coney Island, I pulled a broken Brother HR-15 daisy wheel job out of our garbage bin along with an APPLE II Plus in the same condition, fixed both and then used them to print more resumes. Had to buy the ribbon.The difference was, the old typewriters used spools (two bobbins) and the newer used a cartridge (spools were inside; sometimes one spool, which both dispensed and received the ribbon). Last edited: Apr 29, 2025 What if - and this is just a guess, seeing as the source text remains 'not convenient for publication' - what if 'carbon' is a typo for 'carton'. Our long letter writer went through at least four cartons (of paper). What if - and this is just a guess, seeing as the source text remains 'not convenient for publication' - what if 'carbon' is a typo for 'carton'. Our long letter writer went through at least four cartons (of paper). Ingenious, but it doesn't say "cartons of paper". Either he wrote very long letters, thus using up lots of typewriter ribbons-or he typed 4 extra copies of these long letters, using multiple sheets of carbon paper. The information about the carbons may have nothing to do with the letters being long, and is just an added tidbit of information: the letters were very long, and I typed several copies too.I don't think there's enough context for us to be sure. Original manuscript:At that time, no woman in the world was known as a famous journalist, much less a foreign correspondent, and only a few names were even recognizable by a few readers. A few were editors, such as Snows sponsor, Mrs. William Brown Meloney of the New York Beraid-Tribune Magazine, owned by Mrs. Ogden Reid. I had been influenced by Ida Tarbell's books, not her magazine work. She interviewed Owen D. Young, the admired success story of American business and asked his secret. He replied: I never repeat my own mistakes and I find out the mistakes others have made and don't repeat those either. That impressed me and I strictly followed staying out of messes usually that other people had got into. However, I did repeat my own mistakes beginning with writing Inside Red China I wrote as fast as I could not trying to make the book saleable, but only to get it published. I got into this habit, so that I even now never even re-read my writing, much less editing and changing it except of course for articles intended to be published for certain. This I call do-gooderist journalism, meaning it is written as a public service, not to build up the reputation and readership of the writer herself. I always intended to be careful later but that time never came. Instead of my original idea from the age of eight, when I read The Wizard of Oz, to become a Great Author, I ended up as a Long letter Writer, using at least four carbons on my electric IBM. I once wrote a big book, China Builds for Democracy, for only half a dozen people to readthat is a true do-gooder project. Introduction Carbon paper, also known as carbon paper, was invented in the 20th century. Its practice is generally in the original writing, in advance of the white paper into a copy of the paper. It is possible to make several copies at once, because the carbon is transferred to the copies by the pressure of writing. Therefore, copy paper is a special copy of the paper. Overseas generally referred to as carbon paper, which is also commonly known as carbon paper. There seem to be two voices going here - Helen Foster Snow, and another ("...such as Snow's sponsor...") Carbon film typewriter ribbon wasn't invented when 'Inside Red China' was written but would have been other of her works were written, so the text doesn't really shed any light on the matter.Is this your own work? Thanks for the context. I still think that 'carbon ribbons' is much more likely than 'cartons (of paper)'.My reasoning behind it: Paper is cheap and I doubt a journalist would remember how many cartons they used over the years. Carbon ribbons (cartridges) on the other hand were comparatively expensive. The internet shows a price range of \$50 to \$150 for 2 cartridges, and that's an expense a freelance journalist might remember (especially if they had to pay for it themselves).[x-posted] Last edited: Apr 30, 2025 There seem to be two voices going here - Helen Foster Snow, and another ("...such as Snow's sponsor...") Carbon film typewriter ribbon wasn't invented when 'Inside Red China' was written but would have been other of her works were written, so the text doesn't really shed any light on the matter.Is this your own work? NO, it is an Official manuscript That final sentence in the extract I once wrote a big book, China Builds for Democracy, for only half a dozen people to readthat is a true do-gooder project. reinforces the case for "carbons" to mean typerwiter ribbons, not carbon paper. That final sentence in the extractreinforces the case for "carbons" to mean typewriter ribbons, not carbon paper. Not really - they could have produced the six copies using the carbon paper I ended up as a Long letter Writer, using at least four carbons on my electric IBM! don't see that using four sheets of carbon paper has anything to do with typing long letters. It has to do rather with writing the same letter to five people (assuming the writer doesn't want to keep a copy of the letter).I take it that "That impressed me" begins Helen Foster Snow's words. I wonder if the text in #38 reproduces what she actually said -- there are no quotation marks indicating direct speech and some of the punctuation and syntax is a little odd. I think this explains it: "I wrote as fast as I could", "even now never even re-read my writing, much less editing and changing it", "I always intended to be careful later but that time never came". Not really - they could have produced the six copies using the carbon paper Nah, she was just exaggerating -- in a sarcastic overly humble way.That book was published in India in 1942 (and is now even freely available as pdf on the internet.). It even contains a foreword by Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Indian prime minister.Maybe it didn't sell as well as she had hoped for at that time, but I'm sure it had its share of readers over the years.

What is 4 generations. What is 4 generations in family. What are 3 generations in a family. What is 5 generations in a family. What is a four generation family tree. What is 4th generation in family. What is four generations.

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