SUBJECT - VERB RULES

1. A singular verb in third person ends in an S.

   He goes.  The car runs.  She was tired.  It is sad.

2. A plural verb does not end in an S.

   They go.  The cars run.  They were tired.  They are sad.

3. The subject will not immediately follow a preposition (of, about, across, on, to, from, with, in).

   One of the boys is bad.  The pictures across the room were beautiful.

   The girls with their mother hurry past.  The children from Georgia were coming.

4. When a complete subject has either - or or neither - nor in it, use the simple subject closest to the verb.

   Either the boys or Nancy has to go.  Neither Nancy nor the boys have to go.

5. And between two subjects makes the subject and verb plural.

   Tom and I are sorry.  Dogs and cats have four legs.

6. The phrases one of, neither of, each of, either of are singular.

   One of the boys sings.  Neither of the cars is here.

   Each of the parents laughs.  Either of the animals comes when called.

7. The phrases both of and some of are plural.

   Both of the men are sad.  Some of the children are happy.

8. In a sentence which begins with there, the subject is after the verb.  Note: here, there and where are not subjects.

   Here is your change.  There are no problems.  Where are my keys?
REMINDERS FOR BASIC MECHANICS
(Review Items on Subjects and Verbs)

1. To study a sentence, first find the verb, then ask "who" or "what?" The answer to that question is the subject.

   Waythorn waited for his wife. (Who waited? Waythorn is the subject.)

2. Is, are, was and were are verbs, even though they don't show any action.

   The hills were long and white. (What was long and white? Hills is the subject.)

3. If a sentence gives a command, the subject is you (understood).

   Find the verb first. (Who finds? You [understood] is the subject.)

4. The verb tells what the subject does or is.

5. Sometimes the verb contains more than one word.

6. There may be more than one subject or more than one verb in a sentence.

7. Not is not a verb and never is never a verb.

8. An -ing word without a helping verb is not a verb.

9. An infinitive (to go, to see, to be) is never a verb. It can be a subject.

   Example: To err is human. To know her is a pleasure.

10. The subject and verb are never found in a prepositional phrase.

11. Sometimes the verb, or part of the verb, comes before the subject.