

University of Catania

Scientific Writing Resources

Words and phrases that can confuse

majority are - majority is





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"Majority" can be either singular or plural. Common sense works pretty well in deciding which.

If you want to describe a collection of individuals, then the word should be treated as plural: "The majority of e-mail users are upset about the increase in spam."

If you want to describe a collective group, then consider it singular: "A 90% majority is opposed to scheduling the next meeting at 6:00 A.M."

If you are uncertain which you mean, then choose whatever form sounds best to you; fortunately, or unfortunately, many people do not understand the difference!

"Majority" should be used only with countable nouns: "he ate the majority of the biscuits," but not "he ate the majority of the cake." Instead say, "he ate most of the cake."



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- The vast **majority** of British agriculture **is** devoted to producing meat
- The majority of prior work has focused on a linear combination
- At 20°C, the **majority** of vapour evolved **is** in the C14–C16 hydrocarbon range... (... **most** of the vapour evolved **is...**)

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- The genes harbouring the **majority** of mutations **are** now known...
- ...the majority of black holes have orbital periods shorter than...
- The **majority** of these SNPs were in introns of cortex...
- The majority of the main dipoles are associated to fire traces.
- The **majority** of indels **are** duplications/deletions..
- The vast **majority** of unique genes **are** microbial...
- The **majority** of these studies were conducted in...
- The majority of C. difficile infections are nosocomial.