

## Pronouns

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Most of the time, a pronoun is used to replace a noun. The following are all pronouns: *he, she, they, none, and which*. There are lots more. As you can see, pronouns are usually short words. They are used to make sentences less cumbersome and less repetitive.

Examples:

- Clutching the coin, Maria ran to the shops. She went straight to the counter and bought the sweets.

(*She* is a pronoun. In this example, it replaces the noun *Maria*. Pronouns are used for brevity. Imagine how wearisome a long prose would be if the writer used the full noun (in this case *Maria* every time.)

- The 8-mile walk passes through pasture, parkland and woodland. It takes you alongside many points of interest including a disused airfield.

(*It* is a pronoun. In this example, it replaces *the 8-mile walk*.)

- Tell the finance team that they can use the minibus tomorrow.

(*They* is a pronoun. It replaces *the finance team*.)

## More Than Just the Personal Pronouns

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*I, you, he, she, it, we, they, and who* are all pronouns. As these pronouns often replace nouns representing people, they are called the *personal pronouns*. When most people think of pronouns, it is the personal pronouns that usually spring to mind, but, in fact, there are several different types of pronouns, including:

- Personal pronouns (e.g., *he, they*)
- Demonstrative pronouns (e.g., *this, these*)
- Interrogative pronouns (e.g., *which, who*)
- Indefinite pronouns (e.g., *none, several*)

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- Possessive pronouns (e.g., *his, your*)
- Reciprocal pronouns (e.g., *each other, one another*)
- Relative pronouns (e.g., *which, where*)
- Reflexive pronouns (e.g., *itself, himself*)
- Intensive pronouns (e.g., *itself, himself*)

As stated at the start, most of the time, a pronoun is used to replace a noun, but a pronoun can also replace another pronoun or a noun phrase (which is basically just a noun made up of more than one word).

### Personal Pronouns

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Personal pronouns represent people or things. The personal pronouns are:

- I
- you
- he
- she
- it
- we
- they

### Subjective Personal Pronouns

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The list above shows the subjective personal pronouns. These are the versions used for the subjects of verbs. For example:

- You are happy.
- They won the league.

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## Objective Personal Pronouns

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The objective personal pronouns are *me, you, him, her, it, us, and them*.

These are the versions used when the personal pronouns are objects (like direct objects, indirect objects, and objects of prepositions). For example:

- Paul knows her. (The personal pronoun is a direct object.)
- Paul gave them the letter. (The personal pronoun is an indirect object.)
- Paul went with him. (The personal pronoun is an object of a preposition.)

## Choosing Personal Pronouns

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Native English speakers rarely make mistakes when selecting which personal pronoun to use. However, whether we know it or not, we all select a personal pronoun having first determined its:

- Number

Is the personal pronoun representing something singular or plural?

- Person

Is the personal pronoun representing something:

In the first person? (This is the speaker himself or a group that includes the speaker, i.e., *I, me, we, and us*.)

In the second person? (This is the speaker's audience, i.e., *you*.)

In the third person? (This is everybody else, i.e., *he, she, it, they*.)

- Gender

Is the personal pronoun representing something male, female, or neuter?

- Case

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Is the personal pronoun representing something which is a subject or an object?

### The Personal Pronouns and Their Possessive Versions

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The table below shows the subjective personal pronouns and the objective personal pronouns. For completeness, it also shows the associated possessive adjectives and absolute possessive pronouns.

<b>Person</b>	<b>Subjective Case</b>	<b>Objective Case</b>	<b>Possessive Case Possessive Adjective</b>	<b>Possessive Case Absolute Possessive Pronouns</b>
First Person Singular	I	me	my	mine
Second Person	you	you	your	yours
Third Person Singular	he/she/it	him/her/it	his/her/its	his/hers/its
First Person Plural	we	us	our	ours
Second Person Plural	you	you	your	yours
Third Person Plural	they	them	their	theirs

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