

A **pronoun** is a word used in place of one or more nouns.

We use pronouns to:

- ▶ Refer to a noun (called its antecedent) that usually comes before the pronoun
- ▶ Make our writing clearer, smoother, and less awkward

In the sentence, "Roberto feels that he can win the race," *he* is the pronoun, and *Roberto* is the antecedent.

In the sentence, "Terry and Jim know that they are best friends," *they* is the pronoun, and *Terry* and *Jim* are the noun antecedents.

There are several types of pronouns.

Personal pronouns refer to people and things. They are divided into three categories called *first person* (referring to the person who is speaking: *I* went to the mall), *second person* (referring to the person spoken to: Joey, can *you* see the bus?), and *third person* (referring to anyone or anything else: Bob saw *us* do this assignment). The pronouns in the two example sentences above are personal pronouns.

The following list shows these three categories of personal pronouns:

	Singular	Plural
First person (the person speaking)	I, my, mine, me	we, our, ours, us
Second person (the person spoken to)	you, your, yours	you, your, yours
Third person (some other person or thing)	he, his, him, she, her, hers, it, its	they, their, theirs, them

Pronouns (Continued)

In addition to personal pronouns, there are several other types of pronouns: *reflexive pronouns*, *relative pronouns*, *interrogative pronouns*, *demonstrative pronouns*, and *indefinite pronouns*.

A **reflexive pronoun** is formed by adding *-self* or *-selves* to certain personal pronouns. Examples of reflexive pronouns are *myself*, *himself*, *herself*, *itself*, *ourselves*, *themselves*, *yourself*, and *yourselves*. The sentence, "I found it myself," contains the personal pronoun *I* and the reflexive pronoun *myself*.

Hisself and *theirselves* are NOT real words.


An **interrogative pronoun** is used to ask a question. These pronouns are *which*, *who*, *whom*, and *whose*.

A **demonstrative pronoun** is used to point out a specific person or thing. These pronouns include *this*, *that*, *these*, and *those*. In the sentence, "Theresa, is this yours?" *this* is the demonstrative pronoun, and *yours* is the personal pronoun.

An **indefinite pronoun** often does not refer to a specific or definite person or thing. It usually does not have a definite or specific antecedent as a personal pronoun does. In the sentence, "*Everybody* will select *another* to help with *everything*," the three italicized words are all indefinite pronouns since they take the place of a noun and do not refer to a specific or definite person or thing.

These are all indefinite pronouns:

all	each	more	one
another	either	most	other
any	everybody	much	several
anybody	everyone	neither	some
anyone	everything	nobody	somebody
anything	few	none	someone
both	many	no one	

 **WRITING TIP** Make sure that your pronouns are clear so that readers will not be confused. In the sentence, "John told Fred that he had been invited to Lucy's party," do we know who he is? Not really! Set up the situation preceding that sentence so that it is clear who he is.