

# Pronouns

## What is a pronoun?

A pronoun is a word that is used in place of a noun. Words like "him," "her," "me," "I," and "they" are all pronouns.

While English, and many other languages, have gender-specific pronouns, like "she/her/hers" or "he/him/his," there are also gender-neutral pronouns, such as "they/them/theirs."

### Isn't "they" plural?

Contrary to many early education lessons, the use of a singular "they" has been in English speech and writing for centuries -- the Oxford English Dictionary traced it as far back as 1375!

Singular "they" is used frequently in phrases like, "Someone left their water bottle in the library," or "I'll text them back later."

**Remember: A person's pronouns don't necessarily align with their perceived gender expression or identity. You shouldn't assume someone's pronouns until they tell you -- or you ask!**

## Common Pronouns & Usage

He/Him/His:      He laughed.      I texted him.      That laptop is his.

She/Her/Hers:      She laughed.      I texted her.      That laptop is hers.

They/Them/Theirs:      They laughed.      I texted them.      That laptop is theirs.

Ze/Zir/Zirs:      Ze laughed.      I texted zir.      That laptop is zirs.

Some may use multi-pronouns, like he/they or she/they. Some may not use pronouns at all, preferring only their name.

Make sure to ask and be respectful of people's identities.