

# WHAT ARE PRONOUNS?

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**Pronouns are parts of speech that replace a noun. We often use pronouns to replace an individual's name when referring to them in speech or writing.**

**In English, as in many languages, pronouns carry an inference of gender. Many feel that she/her/hers pronouns mean that the individual in question identifies as female, and that he/him/his pronouns refer to someone identifying as male.**

**This reinforces the gender binary and ignores a historical use of gender-neutral pronouns. It also isn't how language works - languages are dynamic, and do evolve.**

**They/Them/Theirs pronouns have been used for centuries to refer to an individual of unknown gender identity - not just for groups.**

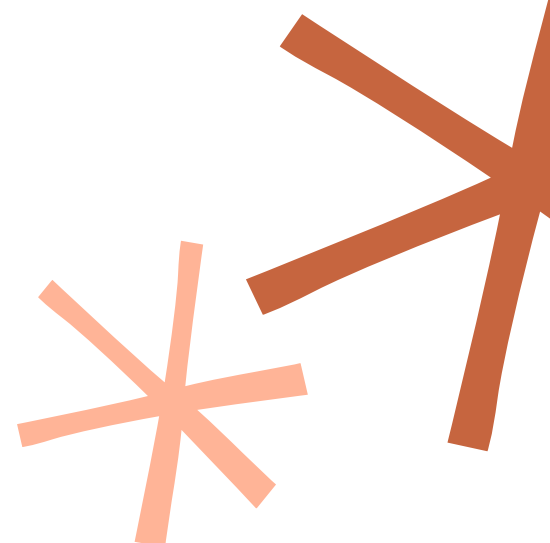
**Ex:**

**That's my friend in the kitchen.**

**They are making dinner.**

**They/Them pronouns are just one way that people, especially Nonbinary or Gender Non-Conforming individuals, have utilized pronouns to indicate their gender identity in a way that is most comfortable and affirming.**

**Neo-pronouns - pronouns that are new to the English language - are also being used more and more.**



# HOW DO I USE THEM?

Let's look at some different pronouns and how they may be used. This is a non-exhaustive list, just some of the most popular!

## He/him/his

He has a pet turtle. The turtle belongs to him. It is his pet.

## She/her/hers

She has a pet turtle. The turtle belongs to her. It is her pet.

## They/them/their(s)

They have a pet turtle. The turtle belongs to them. It is their pet.

## Xe/xem/xyr(s) sometimes xir(s)

Xe has a pet turtle. The turtle belongs to xem. It is xyr pet.


## Sie/hir/hir(s)

Sie has a pet turtle. The turtle belongs to hir. It is hir pet.

# HOW TO BE AN ALLY

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**Pronouns aren't just a word in a sentence. They're an important and affirming part of many peoples' identities. Here are some things to keep in mind to be a good ally:**

- 1. Never assume pronouns! If they are not offered to you, ask. Create space in your community, workplace or friend group for sharing pronouns. Pronouns aren't just for LGBTQ+ people, and some who use different pronouns do not identify as such.**
  - 2. If you make a mistake, correct yourself and move on! Making it a big deal centers yourself and may make the individual uncomfortable. It's human to slip up.**
  - 3. Practice makes perfect! If you're having trouble with someone's pronouns, try writing practice sentences like the ones we provided.**
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[www.practicewithpronouns.com](http://www.practicewithpronouns.com)  
is an excellent resource to practice with  
different pronoun sets!

MY PRONOUNS ARE:

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