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.
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.
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.
www.practicewithpronouns.com is an excellent resource to practice with different pronoun sets!

MY PRONOUNS ARE:

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