

Grammar 4: Pronoun-Antecedent Agreement

A pronoun must agree with its antecedent in **THREE** ways:

Number

Person

Gender

Lesson One: Agreement between Personal Pronouns and Antecedents in Number

➔ Use a singular pronoun with two or more singular antecedents joined by *or* or *nor*.

Example: Either John or Ross always walks **his** dog at Sims Park.

➔ Use a plural personal pronoun with two or more antecedents joined by *and*.

Example: If Martha and Edward want to participate, tell **them** to arrive at 8:30 A.M. sharp.

➔ Use a plural personal pronoun if **ANY** part of a compound antecedent joined by *or* or *nor* is plural.

Example: When Rosie or her children arrive, show **them** their booth.

S

P

NOTE: THIS IS DIFFERENT THAN ANY OTHER RULE WE'VE SEEN FOR SUBJECT - VERB AGREEMENT.

Exercises: Agreement in Personal Pronouns and Antecedents in Number

In each sentence, fill in the blank with the pronoun (or pair of pronouns) that agrees with its antecedent.

1. Barry, Ellen, and Julie have had _____ portfolios accepted for the show.
2. Each Saturday, either Josh or Ted skates by on _____ in – line skates.
3. Both Larry and Elaine like _____ new neighborhood and _____ new house.
4. When Tommy and Byron arrive, tell _____ we are in the cafeteria.
5. Neither Julie nor her sisters want to give up _____ place.

Lesson Two: Agreement in Person and Gender

Singular Pronouns for MASCULINE ANTECEDENTS	Singular Pronouns for FEMININE ANTECEDENTS	Singular Pronouns for NEUTER ANTECEDENTS (gender neutral)
he him his himself	she her hers herself	it its itself
		*Animals and objects are gender neutral, unless specified.

➔ *As part of pronoun-antecedent agreement, do NOT shift person or gender. **When a SINGULAR antecedent can be either masculine or feminine, use "his or her" or rewrite the sentence.***

Example: Each poet has his or her own particular style.

Exercises: Agreement in Person and Gender

In each sentence, correct the unnecessary shift in person or gender and label which type of antecedent is used.

1. They tried to study, but there was too much noise around you.
2. Robin dries her hair in the sun, even though you could use a hair dryer.
3. Carl took the higher path where you could see the deer.
4. The swimming power of a shark comes from his tail.
5. They swam to the far shore, where you could find shells.

Lesson Three: Agreement with Indefinite Pronouns

A Singular	B Plural	C Either
Another Anybody Anyone Anything Each Either	Everybody Everyone Everything Neither Nobody No one	Nothing One Somebody Someone Something
When you have a SINGULAR INDEFINITE PRONOUN: 1. Is your antecedent masculine, feminine, or neuter? That determines your pronoun. 2. Remember even if your antecedent is plural, the indefinite pronoun is singular, and any subsequent pronouns should be singular as well.	When you have a PLURAL INDEFINITE PRONOUN: All pronouns after a plural indefinite pronoun will be plural.	When you have an INDEFINITE PRONOUN THAT CAN BE SINGULAR OR PLURAL: 1. Look for your antecedent – is it plural or singular? 2. Any subsequent pronouns should follow both the number and gender of the original antecedent from the indefinite pronoun.

Examples:

A **Each** of the **women** had to put **her** suitcase in storage.

S S

C **All** of the **members** have sent **their** dues.

E P P

b **Several** of the men brought **their** antique cars.

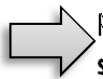
P P

Exercises: Agreement with Indefinite Pronouns

In each sentence, fill in the blank with the pronoun (or pair of pronouns) that agrees with its antecedent.

1. Each of the girls in the family sews _____ own clothes.
2. Anyone who wants to sing in the chorus may sign _____ name on the list.
3. One of the girls has received _____ paycheck.
4. All of the football players have had _____ checkups.
5. Somebody has volunteered _____ time to repair the fence.

Lesson Four: Agreement with Reflexive Pronouns



Reflexive pronouns end in *-self* or *-selves* and are used correctly **only when they refer to a word appearing earlier in the same sentence**

himself

herself

itself

themselves

* HISSELF and THEIRSELVES are NOT reflexive pronouns. They are INCORRECT!

Examples:

Incorrect: Mary treated her to an ice cream cone.

Incorrect: Alex made hisself a sandwich.

Correct: Mary treated herself to an ice cream cone.

Correct: Alex made himself a sandwich.

Exercises: Agreement with Reflexive Pronouns

In each sentence, highlight the correct pronoun in parentheses.

1. Joan taught (her, herself) to breathe deeply when she was afraid.
2. The bat hung (it, itself) upside down from the cave roof.
3. He set the clock to wake (hissel, himself) up early for school.
4. The audience keeps telling (it, itself) the scary film is only a movie.
5. The puppies inched (theirselves, themselves) up onto the step.

Review One

1. When the coach and his players arrive, show (him, them) to the locker room.
2. Neither Charlie nor Ethan turned in (his,their) assignment.
3. My parents sold (their, his or her) car in 4 days.
4. Each of the boys cleans (his, their) room.
5. Romeo told (his, its) parents he wanted to have 10 children.

Review Two

1. Everybody will receive (his, their) new class schedule in the mail.
2. All of the children have had (her, their) shots.
3. Chris, Carla, and Charlie had (his, their) pictures made for the yearbook.
4. Both the Bulldogs and coach Sphire felt good about (his, their) performance.
5. In literature, it is common for each writer to choose a subject based on (their, his or her) personal experiences.

Review Three

1. Rick chose the assignment (he, you) could see was easier.
2. The runners ran to the finish line where (she, they) could see the flag.
3. Both of the boys must wash (his, their) hands before dinner.
4. Many of the girls said the man's bad language offended (her, them).
5. All of the students were prepared to turn in (her, their) assignments on time!