

All About Pronouns

Pronouns are words for referencing a person’s gender. Everyone has a pronoun and we use them to communicate who we are. There are **Binary Pronouns** that generally signify if a person is a woman or a man (though there are exceptions). **Non-Binary Pronouns**, sometimes called **Gender Neutral** or **All-Gender**, describe someone who is not within the binary of women and men. Mistakenly using the wrong pronoun is to **Misgender** someone. Using the correct pronoun is an essential part of showing someone respect. Attending to pronouns also defends against **gender discrimination** including that experienced by transgender and gender non-conforming people. The more we talk about pronouns, the easier they are to learn!

Binary Gender					
She	<i>She</i> laughed	I called <i>her</i>	<i>Her</i> hair	That is <i>hers</i>	<i>She</i> likes <i>herself</i>
He	<i>He</i> laughed	I called <i>him</i>	<i>His</i> hair	That is <i>his</i>	<i>He</i> likes <i>himself</i>
Non-Binary Gender					
They	<i>They</i> laughed	I called <i>them</i>	<i>Their</i> hair	That is <i>theirs</i>	<i>They</i> like <i>themselves</i>
Ze & Hir	<i>Ze</i> laughed	I called <i>hir</i>	<i>Hir’s</i> hair	That is <i>hirs</i>	<i>Ze</i> likes <i>hirsself</i>
Ze	<i>Ze</i> laughed	I called <i>ze</i>	<i>Ze’s</i> hair	That is <i>ze’s</i>	<i>Ze</i> likes <i>zemself</i>

Tips for Learning Pronouns:

- **All pronouns are valid and non-negotiable.** Even if it feels hard or strange to say.
- **Try not to assume.** Pronouns aren’t necessarily defined by a person’s appearance.
- **Start asking!** Ask everyone regardless of name or expression. *“Nice to meet you, what are your pronouns?”* OR *“What are Jason’s pronouns?”*
- **Think about safety.** If a place is crowded or may be unwelcoming, ask in private or wait.
- **If you don’t know someone’s pronoun, replace it with names or descriptions.** *“The person in the red shirt made these cookies!”*
- **Use all-gender language.** *“Hi everyone.”* vs. *“Hi ladies.”* OR *“This person”* vs. *“This man.”*
- **The more ways to share the better.** Put pronouns on name tags, attendance rosters, email signatures, and in introductions. *“Welcome, let’s introduce ourselves with our name, pronoun, and job title.”* Email signature: Name, Pronouns, Contact Info
- **Mistakes happen.** If it does, correct yourself and continue on. Apologize later in private.
- **Advocate.** If someone else makes a mistake, correct them.
- **Make it a priority.** Correct pronouns show respect & increases a person’s safety.