

Pronoun Cases

APSU Writing Center Handout

Pronouns are words that replace nouns or noun phrases. The antecedent is the word or phrase that the pronoun replaces. Pronouns must agree with their antecedents in number (singular or plural), person, and case.

Pronoun–Antecedent Number Agreement

A pronoun must match its antecedent in number.

Example 1: Leo likes to go to the playground because **it** is fun.

- **Explanation:** **It** replaces **playground**, which is singular, so the pronoun is singular.

Example 2: Jack and Jerry like **their** new coats.

- **Explanation:** **Their** replaces **Jack and Jerry**, a plural antecedent, so the pronoun is plural.

Personal Pronouns

First Person: refers to the writer

- **Examples:** I, me, my, we, us, our

Second Person: refers to the reader

- **Examples:** you, your, yours

Third Person: refers to other people or things

- **Examples:** he, she, it, they, them, their, etc.

Relative Pronouns

Relative pronouns introduce clauses that describe (or “relate to”) a noun or antecedent.

Relative Pronouns for People

who – subjective

- **Example:** The teacher who assigned the homework is absent today.

whom – objective

- **Example:** The student whom I helped yesterday passed the test.

Relative Pronouns for Things

which – subjective or objective

- **Example:** The book which you lent me is excellent.

Relative Pronouns for People or Things

that – subjective or objective

- **Example:** The car that I bought last week is already having issues.

whose – possessive

- **Example:** I met the artist whose work is displayed in the gallery.

Pronoun Case

Case refers to the form a pronoun takes based on its function in the sentence.

Subjective (Nominative) Case

Used when the pronoun functions as the subject.

- **Example:** He is the reason that I know how to ice skate.

Possessive Case

Shows ownership.

- **Example:** His dog is quite adorable when it wags its tail.

Objective Case

Used when the pronoun functions as the object of a verb or preposition.

- **Example:** Mom brought Jack and me to the baseball game.