

Gender Neutral / Gender Inclusive Pronouns

Do not assume you know someone's gender just by looking at them. Some languages, such as English, do not have a gender neutral or third gender pronouns available. For example, writers, speakers, etc. use "he/his" when referring to a generic individual in the third person. Also, using "he and she" in English does not leave room for other gender identities. This is a source of frustration to the transgender and gender queer communities.

Pronouns are EVERYWHERE! We use pronouns when identifying people. A pronoun is a word that refers to either the people talking (like I or you) or someone or something that is being talked about (like she, it, them, and this).

A gender neutral or gender inclusive pronoun is a pronoun which **does not** associate a gender with the individual who is being discussed. They are used for greater equality. By choosing a preferred pronoun, the person identifies how they wish to be addressed.

Asking and correctly using someone's preferred pronoun is a way to show your respect. When someone is referred to with the wrong pronoun, it can make them feel disrespected, invalidated, or even dismissed. Just start by asking: "What are your preferred pronouns?" I may be awkward initially, but will get easier.

There are many gender-neutral pronouns in use. Here are a few you might hear:

	Subject	Object	Pronoun	Pronunciation
Gender Binary	she	her	hers	as it looks
	he	him	his	as it looks
Gender Neutral	they*	them*	theirs*	as it looks
	ze	hir	hirs	zhee, here, heres
	ze	zir	zirs	zhee, zhere, zheres
	xe	xem	xyrs	zhee, zhem, zheres

HE/SHE	HIM/HER	HIS/HER	HIS/HERS	HIMSELF/HERSELF
zie	zim	zir	zis	zieself
sie	sie	hir	hirs	hirsself
ey	em	eir	eirs	eirself
ve	ver	vis	vers	verself
tey	ter	tem	ters	terself
e	em	eir	eirs	emself