

Why Pronouns Are Important?

Pronouns are essential in the way we communicate with one another. The importance of pronoun communication, however, is crucial. We use pronouns as a way to identify or refer to someone so next time before making an assumption about someone's pronouns, just ask!

What is a pronoun?

A word that can function by itself as a noun phrase and that refers either to the participants in the discourse (e.g., I, you) or to someone or something mentioned elsewhere in the discourse (e.g., she, it, this).

What are Gender Neutral/Gender Inclusive Pronouns?

Gender neutral or gender inclusive pronouns are unspecific to one gender. Using gender neutral pronouns does not label or associate the person being discussed with a specific gender. This is especially important for people who don't identify with their assigned gender at birth. Physical sex does not determine gender. In other words, genitals do not equal gender. Rather than assume someone's pronouns based on their perceived gender or appearance, it's crucial to ask what their pronouns are.

Pronouns	In a sentence:	Pronunciation
she/her/hers	She wants you to use her pronouns.	
he/him/his	He wants you to use his pronouns.	
ze/hir	Ze wants you to use hir pronouns.	listen here
they/them/theirs	They want you to use their pronouns.	
co/cos	Co wants you to use cos pronouns.	
no pronoun/name (use the person's name instead of a pronoun)	__(name) wants to use __(name) pronouns.	
xe/xem/xyr	Xe wants you to use xem pronouns.	

How do you ask?

- “What pronouns do you use?”
- “What pronouns would you like for me to use?”

It can take time to get someone’s pronouns right. Try your best. Apologize if you do make a mistake and **correct it**. Don’t make it awkward. Remember that respecting someone means also respecting their pronouns.

How do you share?

- “I’m Sally, and my pronouns are ze and hir.”
- “My pronoun is co.”
- “I don’t use pronouns.”

Ways to use inclusive language:

Yes	No
Hey everyone!Hey ya’ll!Hey folks!	Hey guys!
First- Year	Freshman

Gender Inclusive Practices:

- Provide your gender pronouns on your name tag and provide space for participants’ name tags to write in pronouns
- Include your pronouns in your email signature
- Encourage participants to share pronouns during introductions within group activities and meetings
- Only ask for sex or gender on applications if it’s critical or necessary information