

Pronoun Case

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Pronoun Case is really a very simple matter. There are three cases.

Pronouns as SUBJECTS	Pronouns as OBJECTS	Pronouns that show POSSESSION
I	me	my (mine)
You	you	your (yours)
he, she, it	him, her, it	his, her (hers), it (its)
We	us	our (ours)
They	them	their (theirs)
Who	whom	whose

The pronouns **THIS, THAT, THESE, THOSE, and WHICH** do not change form.

Some problems of case:

1. In compound structures, where there are two pronouns or a noun and a pronoun, drop the other noun for a moment. Then you can see which case you want.

NOT: Bob ~~and me~~ travel a good deal. (Would you say, "me travel"?) **No!** You'd say, "**Bob and I travel a good deal.**"

NOT: He gave the flowers to ~~Jane and I~~. (Would you say, "he gave the flowers to I"?) **No!** You'd say, "**He gave the flowers to me.**"

NOT: Us ~~men~~ like the coach. (Would you say, "us like the coach"?) **No!** You'd say, "We men like the coach."

2. In comparisons. Comparisons usually follow than or as:

He is taller than I (**am tall**).

This helps you as much as (**it helps**) me.

She is as noisy as I (**am**).

Comparisons are really shorthand sentences which usually omit words, such as those in the parentheses in the sentences above. If you complete the comparison in your head, you can choose the correct case for the pronoun.

NOT: He is taller than me. (Would you say, "He is taller than me **am tall**"?) **No!**

Okay, here's where the majority of you messed up on the quiz. I'm only pulling out the details you got wrong.

1. Pronouns must agree in person and number. Do you know what that means? If not, look at your 2 pronoun handouts!
2. With the conjunction "or" or "nor," the pronoun should agree with the closest antecedent (an antecedent is the noun that the pronoun refers to).

Bad, bad sentence...very bad...

Either Karen or Len play with their children.

Here's the problem -

There is a plural pronoun

Len is the nearest antecedent and is a singular noun

Ah....much better....

Either Karen or Len plays with his children.

3. With the conjunction "and," the pronoun becomes plural.

Bad, bad sentence...very bad...

Both Jean Claude Van Damme and Steven Seagal are terrible actors; he loves individually karate chopping 23 bad guys even when he's got a gun.

Here's The problem -

He: singular pronoun

Jean-Claude Van Damme and Steven Seagal: plural noun

Ah....much better....

Both Jean Claude Van Damme and Steven Seagal are terrible actors; they love individually karate chopping 23 bad guys even when they've got a gun.

4. Pronouns must agree with their antecedent

Bad, bad sentence...very bad...

Each softball player brought their own bat.

Ah....much better....

Each softball player brought her own bat.

...or...

All softball players brought their own bats.

