



Pronoun-Antecedent Agreement

What Is Pronoun-Antecedent Agreement?

A pronoun is a word (*he, she, it, they*) that takes the place of a noun. An antecedent is the word the pronoun refers to or replaces. In a sentence, the antecedent comes before the pronoun. A pronoun must agree with its antecedent in person, number, and gender.

Common Rules To Follow For Agreement:

1. Two singular objects connected by *and* require a plural pronoun.
Ex: Julie and Mike have chosen **their** costumes for the party.
2. Words such as *both, several, and many* are plural and require plural pronouns.
Ex: Both of my cats ate **their** food.
3. The following words, when used as subjects, are always singular and must have singular pronouns:
Ex: Either of the boys will loan you **his** book.
Ex: Each of the girls brought **her** sleeping bag.
4. A pronoun must agree with its antecedent, not with the object of a prepositional phrase.
Ex: One of the boys kicked **his** book.
5. Company names always require singular pronouns.
Ex: MacFrugal's will soon have all of **its** spring clothes on sale.
6. Two singular subjects connected by the conjunction *or* require a singular pronoun.
Ex: Gloria or Lisa has promised to lend me **her** bike.
7. If one of the subjects joined by *or* or *nor* is singular and the other plural, the pronoun agrees with the closer word.
Ex: Either the dog or the **cats** lost **their** tray.
Ex: Neither the cats nor the **dog** lost **its** toy.
8. Collective nouns (*army, class, family*) take a singular pronoun when the noun refers to the group as a whole and a plural pronoun when the noun refers to the individual members of the group.
Ex of unit: The band marched **its** most intricate formation.
Ex of individual: The band found **their** seats in the bleachers.

Remember:

A pronoun must agree with its antecedent in person, number, and gender.