

PRONOUNS: FORM AND REFERENCE

Pronouns are shortcut words. *He* can stand for "the leading candidate." *This* can stand for "the letter in my hand." Like other shortcuts, pronouns can get a writer into trouble.

- (1) **Personal pronouns** have alternate forms for use in subject and object positions. In written English, use *I, he, she, we, they*, as the subject of a verb: *I* like it; *he* lives here; *we* agree. Use *me, him, her, us, them* as the object of a verb: catch *me*; hit *him*; forgive us. Use the *me* or *him* forms also after a preposition: with *me*; without *him*; against *us*; for *them*.

<u>Subject</u>	<u>Object</u>	<u>Object</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Object</u>	<u>Object</u>
<i>She</i> introduced	<i>me</i>	to <i>him</i> .	<i>He</i> connected	<i>us</i>	with <i>them</i> .
<i>I</i> directed	<i>them</i>	to <i>her</i> .	<i>They</i> referred	<i>her</i>	to <i>us</i>

Make sure to use the appropriate form even when the pronoun is only part of a combination subject or object: Phil and **I, we** Americans, between you and **me**.

Subject Form: *Fred* and *I* study together. *We girls* usually stay up late. *She and her husband* never got along. *He and his dogs* drive me crazy. *He and I* applied for the same job.

Object Form: They invited *Fred and me*. They never really liked *us girls*. I met *her and her husband*. Avoid *him and his dogs*. The company hired *him and me*.

Object Form: This letter is *for her and her husband*. This is strictly *between you and me*. He really spoke up *for us girls*. You couldn't live *with him and me* in the same job.

- (2) *Who* is the subject form. *Whom* is the object form. In questions, *who* asks a question about the subject. *Whom* asks a question about an object.

Subject: *Who* met you at the station? (*He* did.)

Subject: *Who* do you think will win? (*He* will win.)

Object: *Whom* did you invite to the party? (I invited *him*.)

Object: *Whom* do you expect to win? (I expect him to *win*.)

Object: To *whom* should I write? (To *him*.)

To apply the *he/him* test (or *she/her* test) to a dependent clause, separate it from the rest of the sentence.

I know / *who* gave you the money. (*She* gave you the money.)

I know / *whom* you asked to come. (You asked *her* to come.)

We asked the man / *who* was waiting. (He was waiting.)

We found the man / *whom* you had described. (You described *him*.)

There is a reward for / *whoever* gets there first. (*He* gets there first.)

Here is the friend / for *whom* I reserved the seat. (I reserved the seat for *him*.)

- (3) When a pronoun follows *as* or *than*, fill in any omitted part of the comparison to see if the subject form or the object form is need.