

Note on reflexive pronouns

By myself / yourself

The expression by myself / yourself etc., is used to mean 'alone' or 'without help.'

I can solve this problem by myself. (= I can solve this problem without help.)

She likes to spend time by herself. (= She likes to be alone.)

My own, your own etc

Reflexive pronouns do not have a possessive form. For example, we cannot say: himself's photos or herself's books. Instead, we use an expression with own.

He cooks his own meals. (NOT He cooks himself's meals.)

She designs her own clothes. (NOT She designs herself's clothes.)

Verbs not used with reflexives

Certain verbs are not usually used with reflexive pronouns. Examples are: wash, dress, concentrate, feel, strange and shave

He shaves every day. (NOT He shaves himself every day.)

Hurry! (NOT Hurry yourself!)

But reflexives are used when it is necessary to make it clear who does the action.

The barber shaves people who don't shave themselves. (NOT The barber shaves people who don't shave.)