

What are reflexive pronouns?

Reflexive pronouns are words like *myself, yourself, herself, himself, itself, oneself, ourselves* and *themselves*.

Uses

A very common use of reflexive pronouns is to talk about actions where the subject and object are the same person.

The old woman killed herself. (Here the subject and object are the same person – the old woman.)

I am going to the shops to get myself some clothes.

Emphatic use

We can use reflexive pronouns as subject or object emphasisers. When used emphatically a reflexive pronoun means *'that person / thing and nobody / nothing else'*.

The manager himself said this. (= The manager and nobody else said this.)

I myself talked to him.

I will see the President himself if I have to.

Reflexives used instead of personal pronouns

Reflexive pronouns are used instead of personal pronouns after words like *as, like, but (for)* and *except (for)*.

Everybody turned up except yourself. OR Everybody turned up except you.

By oneself / yourself etc

The expressions by oneself / yourself etc can mean 'alone' or 'without company'.

She said that she would like to spend some time by herself. (= She would like to spend some time alone.)

No possessive forms

What are reflexive pronouns?

The reflexive pronouns do not have possessive forms. Instead, we use *my own, your own, our own* etc.

I always cook my own food. (NOT I always cook myself's food.)

Reflexives not used

Certain verbs are not used with reflexive pronouns. Examples are: *open, sell, feel, hurry* etc.

Hurry! (NOT Hurry yourself!)

I felt strange. (NOT I felt myself strange.)