



## Pronoun-Antecedent Agreement

A common error writers make is pronoun-antecedent disagreement; meaning, the pronoun doesn't match (agree) with the noun it refers to (the antecedent). Much like subject-verb agreement, pronoun-antecedent agreement requires singular pronouns to align with singular antecedents and plural pronouns to match plural antecedents.

Also like subject-verb agreement, there are a few situations that can make pronoun-antecedent more problematic for writers.

### ➤ Basic Examples:

The **students** turned in **their** assignments on time. (Plural antecedent and plural pronoun)

The **student** turned in all **his/her** assignments on time. (Singular antecedent and singular pronoun)

**Michael** and **Emily** turned in **their** assignments on time. (Compound antecedent and plural pronoun)

### ➤ Indefinite Pronouns:

When an indefinite pronoun is the antecedent of a sentence, it is usually treated as a singular antecedent and requires a singular pronoun.

**Someone** has eaten all the food in the house and left **his** or **her** crumbs on the table.

**One** of the girls has lost **her** earring.

### Some exceptions:

*Both, few, many, other, and several* are always plural antecedents.

**Both** of my brothers love **their** cars.

*All, any, more, most, none, and some* can be singular or plural, depending on the context of the sentence.

**Some** of the students turned in **their** assignments on time.

**Some** of the assignment is complete, but **its** final three paragraphs are missing.

➤ **Collective Nouns:**

Collective nouns are usually considered singular.

The **class** took **its** lessons seriously.

The **band** played **its** most popular song.

The **jury** returned with **its** verdict.

The **committee** wrote **its** laws and bi-laws.

Follow these explanations and examples to correct pronoun-antecedent disagreement in your writing.