



# Being Proactive with Pronouns

Offering your pronouns is not for just when you're in doubt. The idea behind offering their pronouns is to signal that you are providing an inclusive environment where everyone is respected how they identify. For transgender people, a transition **may or may not** include medications and surgeries, and they are not more or less valid for it. A person's pronouns are ultimately the only information you need to respectfully move forward with conversation.

## How do I ask someone about their pronouns?

**If you are introducing yourself first,** share your name and pronouns, which should set up the other person to reciprocate.

*Example: "Hi, I'm Danny, he/him"  
"Hi, I'm Linda, they/them"*

### **What if the other person introduces themselves first, but without pronouns?**

Offer your name and pronouns in return, and then ask "and what are your pronouns?"

**Already beyond the first meeting and unsure?** Just ask! "Excuse me, what are your pronouns?" and offer yours in return. If they are not engaging or combative, feel free to either move on, or to share why you value sharing pronouns.

## How can I be more proactive about sharing my pronouns?

**Offer your pronouns when introducing yourself.** Yes! Even if you don't think the person may be transgender or if others are not offering theirs.

**Writing a name tag for an event?** Include your pronouns under your name!

**Add pronouns to your e-mail signature.**

Firstname Lastname  
she / her

## What if I'm having a hard time with pronouns?

**Practice, practice, practice.** Both referring to a person with their pronouns and sharing your own

**They/them pronouns are never incorrect.** You likely use them already if you are unsure of someone's identity.

**Use *their* name instead of *their* pronouns.** "Dan is so smart." "I haven't seen Rebecca in a while." "Bri is the funniest"

**When you hear someone make a mistake, offer a correction.** Allyship occurs even when the person is not around

**What do I do when I misgender or deadname someone?** Very simply, correct yourself by using the person's correct noun or pronoun, then move on. The situation will become more awkward for you and the person who was misgendered if you become hung up on explaining why the mistake occurred.

*Examples: "Sorry, she" "Max, sorry"*