

PRONOUN REFERENCE

The word to which a pronoun refers is its antecedent. To avoid unclear or awkward references, move the pronoun closer to its antecedent or substitute a noun for the pronoun.

UNCLEAR: Lisa wrote to Jennifer every day when she was in the hospital.
(**Who** was in the hospital?)

CLEAR: When Jennifer was in the hospital, Lisa wrote to her every day.

UNCLEAR: Before Ellen could get to the jewelry store, it was all sold
(**What** was all sold?)

CLEAR: Before Ellen could get to the jewelry store, all the jewelry was sold.

Do not refer to an implied or general idea with vague pronouns, such as this, that, which, and such. Specify the antecedent by replacing the pronoun with a definite noun or by eliminating the reference altogether.

UNCLEAR: Lois said that she would stay in Yuma for at least a year. **This** suggests that she is happy there. (This **what**?)

CLEAR: Lois said that she would stay in Yuma for at least a year. **This remark** suggests that she is happy there.

Avoid the indefinite use of you, they, or it.

CLEAR: The person who cannot swim fears deep, stormy waters.

UNCLEAR: In McKenny's book it says that many mushrooms are edible.

CLEAR: McKenny's book states that many mushrooms are edible.