

# Myself/yourself/themselves etc.

## A

Study this example:

George cut **himself** when he was shaving this morning.

We use **myself/yourself/himself** etc. (*reflexive pronouns*) when the *subject* and *object* are the same:

subject → George cut himself . ← object



The reflexive pronouns are:

singular: myself      yourself (one person)      himself/herself/itself  
plural: ourselves      yourselves (more than one person)      themselves

- I don't want you to pay for me. I'll pay for **myself**. (not 'I'll pay for me')
- Julia had a great holiday. **She** enjoyed **herself** very much.
- Do **you** sometimes talk to **yourself**? (said to one person)
- If **you** want more to eat, help **yourselves**. (said to more than one person)

Compare:

- It's not our fault. **You** can't blame **us**.
- It's our own fault. **We** blame **ourselves**.

Note that we do *not* use **myself/yourself** etc. after 'bring/take something with...':

- It might rain. I'll **take** an umbrella **with me**. (not 'with myself')

## B

We do *not* use **myself** etc. after **concentrate/feel/relax/meet**:

- You must try and **concentrate**. (not 'concentrate yourself')
- 'Do you **feel** nervous?' 'Yes, I can't **relax**.'
- What time shall we **meet**? (not 'meet ourselves', not 'meet us')

We normally use **wash/shave/dress** *without myself* etc.:

- He got up, **washed**, **shaved** and **dressed**. (not 'washed himself' etc.)

But we say 'I **dried myself**'.

## C

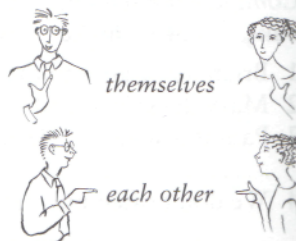
Study the difference between **-selves** and **each other**:

- Tom and Ann stood in front of the mirror and looked at **themselves**. (= Tom and Ann looked at Tom and Ann)

but • Tom looked at Ann; Ann looked at Tom. They looked at **each other**.

You can use **one another** instead of **each other**:

- How long have you and Bill known **one another**? (or ...known **each other**)
- Sue and Ann don't like **each other**. (or ...don't like **one another**)



## D

We also use **myself/yourself** etc. in another way. For example:

- 'Who repaired your bicycle for you?' 'Nobody. I repaired it **myself**.'

'I repaired it **myself**' = I repaired it, not anybody else. Here, **myself** is used to *emphasise I* (= it makes it stronger). Some more examples:

- I'm not going to do it for you. **You** can do it **yourself**. (= you, not me)
- Let's paint the house **ourselves**. It will be much cheaper.
- **The film itself** wasn't very good but I liked the music.
- I don't think Sue will get the job. **Sue herself** doesn't think she'll get it. (or Sue doesn't think she'll get it herself.)

**32.1** Complete each sentence using **myself/yourself etc.** with one of these verbs (in the correct form):

blame burn ~~cut~~ enjoy express hurt put

- 1 George cut himself while he was shaving this morning.
- 2 Bill fell down some steps but fortunately he didn't ..... badly.
- 3 It isn't her fault. She really shouldn't .....
- 4 Please try and understand how I feel. .... in my position.
- 5 They had a great time. They really .....
- 6 Be careful! That pan is very hot. Don't .....
- 7 Sometimes I can't say exactly what I mean. I wish I could ..... better.

**32.2** Put in **myself/yourself/ourselves etc.** or **me/you/us etc.**

- 1 Julia had a great holiday. She enjoyed herself...
- 2 It's not my fault. You can't blame .....
- 3 What I did was very wrong. I'm ashamed of .....
- 4 We've got a problem. I hope you can help .....
- 5 'Can I take another biscuit?' 'Of course. Help .....!'
- 6 Take some money with ..... in case you need it.
- 7 Don't worry about Tom and me. We can look after .....
- 8 I gave them a key to our house so that they could let ..... in.
- 9 When they come to visit us, they always bring their dog with .....

**32.3** Complete these sentences. Use **myself/yourself etc.** only where necessary. Use one of these verbs (in the correct form): concentrate defend dry feel meet relax ~~shave~~ wash

- 1 Martin decided to grow a beard because he was fed up with shaving...
- 2 I wasn't very well yesterday but I ..... much better today.
- 3 She climbed out of the swimming pool and ..... with a towel.
- 4 I tried to study but I just couldn't .....
- 5 If somebody attacks you, you need to be able to .....
- 6 I'm going out with Chris this evening. We're ..... at the station at 7.30.
- 7 You're always rushing around. Why don't you sit down and .....?
- 8 There was no water, so we couldn't .....

**32.4** Complete the sentences with **-selves** or **each other**.

- 1 How long have you and Bill known each other?
- 2 If people work too hard, they can make ..... ill.
- 3 I need you and you need me. We need .....
- 4 In Britain friends often give ..... presents at Christmas.
- 5 Some people are very selfish. They only think of .....
- 6 Nora and I don't see ..... very often these days.
- 7 We couldn't get back into the house. We had locked ..... out.
- 8 They've had an argument. They're not speaking to ..... at the moment.
- 9 We'd never met before, so we introduced ..... to .....

**32.5** Complete the answers to the questions using **myself/yourself/itself etc.**

- 1 Who repaired the bicycle for you?
- 2 Did Brian have his hair cut by a hairdresser?
- 3 Do you want me to post that letter for you?
- 4 Who told you that Linda was getting married?
- 5 Can you phone John for me?

- 1 Nobody. I repaired it myself...
- 2 No, he cut .....
- 3 No, I'll .....
- 4 Linda .....
- 5 Why can't you .....?