

# 57) Using verbs with reflexive pronouns

We use **reflexive pronouns** when the object is the same person/thing as the subject. We often use them with certain verbs.

*I cut myself using that knife. (NOT I cut me ...)*

*Why are you looking at yourself in the mirror?*

*He tried to kill himself. (Different from He tried to kill him. = another person)*

*I wanted to pay for everyone, but Jessica paid for herself.*

*That cat is always washing itself.*

*We enjoyed ourselves at the club last night.*

*You boys will hurt yourselves if you jump out of that tree.*

*Surprisingly, all the children behaved themselves during the trip.*



## SPOTLIGHT | reflexive verbs

Some languages use reflexive verbs more than English. Be careful not to make these mistakes:

- I like to relax myself/me.
- I feel myself/me very tired.
- Where shall we meet ourselves/us?

The following verbs and expressions are also used with reflexive pronouns:

*If you're still hungry, just help yourself to more food. (= take what you want)*

*They're not in great health – they need to take care of themselves. (= look after themselves)*

*He's too emotional and he can't control himself. (= control his feelings)*

*I taught myself Italian. (= I worked alone without a teacher.)*

*It took her a few minutes to calm herself (down) after the argument. (= become quiet and relaxed)*

### 1 Complete the correct reflexive pronoun.

- I decided to help myself .....
- 1 She taught .....
- 2 I think they hurt .....
- 3 He can't take care of .....

- 4 I told you to behave .....
- 5 I just helped ..... to more chicken.
- 6 Don't worry, we can take care of .....
- 7 You all enjoyed ..... , didn't you?

### 2 Complete each dialogue.

- How did you learn the piano? ~ I just taught ..... myself.
- 1 Will you look after Sacha? ~ No, she's old enough to take ..... of herself.
- 2 There's blood here. ~ I know. Ben ..... himself using the bread knife.
- 3 Can I buy you a drink? ~ No, it's OK, I'll ..... for myself.
- 4 Have you ..... yourself? ~ Yes, I banged my leg on the table, and it's very painful.
- 5 Did Ben shout at you? ~ Yes, he gets angry very easily and just can't ..... himself.
- 6 Remember, this is a very formal dinner. ~ Don't worry, I'll ..... myself.

### 3 Complete the sentences with the correct verb and reflexive pronoun.

- I go to parties, but I don't often really enjoy ..... myself.
- 1 I go to a language class because I don't think I'd be very good at .....
- 2 When I go to a restaurant with someone, I usually like to ..... for .....
- 3 If I want to ..... down, I usually sit quietly and breathe deeply .....
- 4 I think I spend too much time ..... at ..... in the mirror.
- 5 In my country, more young men are ..... in recent years. Is life harder than it used to be?
- 6 In my country, young children don't always ..... in other people's houses.

## ABOUT YOU

### 4 ABOUT YOU Are the sentences in Exercise 3 true for you or your country? Write your answers, or talk to another student.

