

Demonstrative pronouns in English (lesson with examples)

WHAT ARE THE DEMONSTRATIVE PRONOUNS IN ENGLISH?

A demonstrative pronoun is used to replace a particular thing (singular or plural), which has already been mentioned before, or which can be designated by the context.

- **this / that**
- **these / those**

these is the plural of *this*, *those* is the plural of *that*:

- **this dog / these dogs**
- **that cat / those cats**

There is no gender difference:

- **this boy and this girl**
- **those men and those women**

UTILISATION

This, that, these and those can be used as determinants or pronouns:

- Take **this** pen
- Take **this**.
- Give me **that** book.
- Give me **that**.

What is the difference between THIS and THAT?

We choose between *this* and *that* to show the degree of distance from the person speaking (a little like *here* and *there* in French). As a general rule, *this*/*these* marks proximity to the enunciator, *that*/*those* marks distance:

THE DISTANCE IN SPACE

THIS or THESE is used to talk about a person, thing or place that is close to the person speaking:

- **This** is my brother
- **These** are my shoes.

- Is **this** your pen?

THAT or THOSE is used to talk about a person, thing or place that is further away from the person speaking:

- I can see **that** from here.
- **That** man over there is my boss.
- **Those** men are detectives.

DISTANCE IN TIME

THIS refers to the future or the present, THAT to the past (to talk about something that is not present):

- On **that** day, she was really tired, but she's feeling better **this** week.
- **That** movie we watched last night was awesome.

EMOTIONAL DISTANCE

- **That** dog is dangerous!
- I hate **this** tee-shirt, but I love those shoes!

OTHER USES

1 - THIS can be used to announce something, and THAT to refer to the past:

- **This** is what she told me: "You can do it!"
- "You can do it!": **that's** what she told me.

2 - To avoid a repetition: we can forward this/that by one, and these/those by ones :

- Which photo do you prefer? **This** one or **that** one?
- Which fruits can you eat ? **These** ones or **those** ones?

3 - To compare:

- I don't like **those** trousers. **These** are a bit better.
- **This** tee-shirt is nice; **that** one is ugly.

4 - This, these, that, that, those can be pronouns and replace a name or a sentence:

- I think **this** is awesome! (*This* replace quelque chose de connu.)

5 - To contact us by phone:

- Hello, **this** is Jane speaking. Who is **this**?

6 - This and these can refer to situations that are happening:

- Listen to **this** song. (NOT: Listen to ~~that~~ song.)

7 - That and those can refer to experiences that have just ended:

- Who said **that**?
- Who did **that**?

8 - We use THAT in expressions like that's it and that's that

- **That's it**, I'm going home.
- I broke up with Claire, and **that's that**.

9 - Other utilisations:

- The best movie of the festival was **that** made by Spielberg.
- We are organizing a trip to London. **Those** interested should speak with Sam.