

6. PRONOUNS

A. SUBJECT PRONOUNS

The subject of a verb is the person (or thing) carrying out the action, and can be represented by a pronoun in the first, second, or third person, singular or plural, as follows:

	Singular		Plural	
1st	I	eu	we	nós
2nd	you	tu	you	vós
3rd	he/it	ele	they (<i>m</i>)	eles
	she/it	ela	they (<i>f</i>)	elas
	you	você	You	vocês

Forms of address (how you call someone “you”) can be complex, but in general:

tu	family, close friends, children, pets
você	predominant in Brazil, widely used in Portugal – slightly more formal
o/a + first name	colleagues, less-close friends
o senhor/a senhora	very polite, with strangers, older people
verb on its own*	verb in 3rd person singular
vós	“you” plural, mainly now just church services, when addressing crowds/some older people, especially in rural areas

vocês	widespread, acceptable form for “you” plural
os senhores/as senhoras	polite address
verb on its own*	verb in 3rd person plural
*neutral, polite form	

Portuguese subject pronouns do not necessarily need to be used with the verb, as in many cases the verb ending denotes the subject. However, to avoid any ambiguity, pronouns should be used with the third person forms (which can mean he, she, it, they or you), unless there is no doubt as to who or what the subject is.

B. OBJECT PRONOUNS

Object pronouns receive the action of the verb. They can be direct, indirect or reflexive, and can be used with prepositions.

a) Direct object pronouns

The direct object directly receives the action of the verb. It responds to the direct questions What? or Whom?

Singular		Plural	
me	me	nos	us
te	you	vos	you
o (m)	him; it; you	os (m)	them; you
a (f)	her; it; you	as (f)	them; you
vejo-te	I see you	compraste-o?	did you buy it?
ajuda-nos	help us		