

Double Possessives & Self-Sufficiency: Independence

INTERMEDIATE

Focus: a friend of mine, possessive pronouns, transforming 'one of my' structures, do something oneself, cuts his own hair, grow my own vegetables, using 'own' with verbs, on my own, by myself, reflexive pronoun patterns

1. The Double Possessive (Noun + of + Possessive Pronoun)

We use this structure to describe one of a group of things or people. It emphasizes the person to whom the noun belongs, often implying "one of several."

Structure: A/An/Some + Noun + of + Possessive Pronoun

- **Standard:** One of my friends.
- **Double Possessive:** A friend **of mine**. (Not: ~~A friend of me~~)

Possessive Pronouns:

- (I) -> **of mine**
- (You) -> **of yours**
- (He) -> **of his**
- (She) -> **of hers**
- (We) -> **of ours**
- (They) -> **of theirs**

*Example: "I met an old colleague **of yours** yesterday."*

2. Expressing Independence: "Alone" or "Without Help"

There are two very common phrases used to say that someone did something alone.

A. By + Reflexive Pronoun

- I went to the cinema **by myself**.
- She lives **by herself**.

B. On + Possessive Adjective + Own

- I went to the cinema **on my own**.
- She lives **on her own**.

Note: These phrases are usually interchangeable.

- Correct: "Did you do it **by yourself**?"
- Correct: "Did you do it **on your own**?"

3. Emphasizing Ownership: "Own"

We use the word **own** after a possessive adjective (my, your, his, etc.) to emphasize that something belongs only to one person, or that the person does the action independently without buying a service.

Structure: Possessive Adjective + own + Noun

- **Emphasis:** "I don't want to borrow your pen. I have **my own pen**."
- **Self-Sufficiency:** "He grows **his own vegetables**." (He doesn't buy them).
- **Services:** "She cuts **her own hair**." (She doesn't go to a hairdresser).

Practice: Independence and Possession

Instruction: Complete the sentences using the correct **Double Possessive**, **Reflexive Phrase**, or **'Own' structure** based on the cues in brackets. Pay close attention to the context (Positive, Negative, or Question).

Cues Key:

- (*Double Poss*) = Use "noun + of + mine/yours/etc."
- (*By...*) = Use "by + reflexive pronoun"
- (*On...*) = Use "on + possessive + own"
- (*Own*) = Use "possessive + own + noun"

1. That man waving at us is _____. (Double Poss / brother / I)
2. She _____; she usually travels with her family. (Negative / travel / by...)
3. _____ these vegetables in your garden? (Question / you / grow / own)
4. We successfully repaired the engine _____. (On... / we)
5. He is _____; I have never met him before. (Negative / friend / mine)
6. Why _____ to the party? Was nobody free to go with you? (Question / you / go / by...)
7. They prefer to bake _____ rather than buying it at the bakery. (Own / bread / they)
8. I didn't finish the project with a team; I did it _____. (Negative / with help / I did it / on...)
9. Is Sarah _____? I think I recognize her. (Question / colleague / yours)
10. The children walked to school _____ for the first time today. (By... / they)
11. That idea was _____; we copied it from the internet. (Negative / idea / ours)
12. Does he really paint _____ inside the house, or did he hire a painter? (Question / his / walls / own)
13. Several _____ complained about the loud music last night. (Double Poss / neighbours / hers)
14. She _____; she needs assistance to walk. (Negative / can / walk / on...)
15. Are those students _____? They seem to know you. (Question / pupils / his)

Answer Key

1. a brother **of mine**
2. doesn't travel **by herself** (or *didn't travel by herself*)
3. Do you grow your **own vegetables**
4. **on our own**
5. not a friend **of mine**
6. did you go **by yourself**
7. their **own bread**
8. **on my own**
9. a colleague **of yours**
10. **by themselves**
11. not an idea **of ours**
12. his **own walls**
13. neighbours **of hers**
14. cannot walk **on her own** (or *can't walk on her own*)
15. pupils **of his**