

POV: NARRATIVE PERSPECTIVES

Narrator	Pronoun clues	Characteristics of this POV	Advantages/Disadvantages
First Person (Past or Present)	I, me, my, mine, we, us, ours	In the narrator's head continuously	Intimate connection with protagonist; great POV when writing about someone different from most of your readers Cannot tell thoughts and feelings of others; must be discovered through action and dialogue; can get claustrophobic spending an entire book in one person's head (plot and voice very important)
Second Person	You, Your	Least common POV for fiction Most commonly used for instructions, cookbooks, guide books, and how-to manuals	Most efficient way to communicate instructions, direct a process Difficult for amateur fiction writers; style can be off-putting for some readers
Third Person:	He, she, her, him, they, them and character names	Narrator usually isn't involved; tells others' stories	Most common narrative style in modern fiction (although First Person is gaining ground)
Objective		Narrator does not reveal any character's thoughts or feelings; Reader has to discern motives by observing others' actions and speech, just like in real life	Allows author to keep characters' true motives and loyalties hidden; effective for mystery and suspense All thoughts and feelings must be shown via dialogue and action; reader has to figure out who to root for
Limited		Narrator is limited to one character in the story; tells thoughts and feelings of just one character throughout the story	Being in only one person's head creates in the reader an instant bond with that character above all others in the story Action is limited to character's location; can prove difficult with an ensemble cast of characters
Omniscient		Reader gets to know the thoughts and feelings of <u>more than one</u> character	Allows multiple characters to tell story (they don't all have to be with one character throughout the story); readers get to know the inner journeys of multiple characters; best for literary novels Removes mystery from your characters and deprives them of the ability to surprise your readers

Establish narrative perspective (POV) early in the scene to orient your reader.

Use only one Point of View per scene.

Fully express one character's thoughts before moving on to another.

If the POV character for a scene doesn't know something, it can't be included in the scene, even if the reader learned it in a previous scene.