

FUNCTION OF DEMONSTRATIVES

Whether speaking or listening, reading or writing, we use *reference type* words to identify people or things in a particular context, to refer back to ideas, facts or information, to point to something mentioned earlier or to track participants (someone or something) in a story.

It may be talking about our preference for 'these shoes' in relation to some other ones, reading about 'those who participated in the survey', writing about 'this remedy to a pollution problem' as opposed to another or listening for information about the answer to 'the person who stole that car'.

STUDY TIPS

Remember when referring to or talking about people or things, which are near to you in space or time, use **this** and **these**.

If they are more distant in space or time then **that** and **those** are used.

These are examples of **demonstratives** and their function is to indicate the proximity in time and space of what is being identified, referred to, discussed, described, pointed to, explained etc.

IDENTIFYING DEMONSTRATIVES

There are four demonstratives:

<i>Singular</i>	<i>Plural</i>
this	these
that	those

They can function either as adjectives or as pronouns.

Demonstrative adjectives

	Demonstrative Adjective	Noun	Verb	
Singular	This	fruit	is	refreshing.
	These	shoes	are	comfortable.
Plural	That	house	is	sold.
	Those	apartments	sold	recently.

Demonstrative pronouns

	Demonstrative Pronouns	Verb	
Singular	This	is	Jane
	These	are	my friends.
Plural	That	is	appalling.
	Those	are	delicious.

Other forms

Singular

this }
that } + one

Which hat do you like? I like **this one**. I like **that one**.

Plural

these
those

Which flowers do you prefer? **These** are more fragrant than **those**.

Comparative statements using that/those

noun phrase + verb + ...er than + that + of noun phrase
those

The fruit in tropical regions is *tastier than that* of other areas.

Meaning

Demonstratives are used to differentiate between the proximity of a speaker, listener, thing, object etc. in terms of both time and space.

Proximity			
nearness		remoteness	
space			
'here'	The apartment in this building is going to auction. These students are waiting to enrol.	'there'	I don't know whether that apartment will be auctioned. Those students are picking up their student card.
time			
'now'	Do you know which courses they've scheduled this semester? These days we correspond via e-mail.	'then'	Did you know they only offered one elective in that semester? In those days we used "snail mail".

Context and meaning

Demonstrative	Meaning	Example
this	an action or experience which takes place in the near future	This is going to be interesting film!
that	an action or experience which took place in the past	That was a great movie!
this/these	showing interest in or approval of someone/ something	I'm dying to hear about this holiday on the Riviera.
that/those	showing dislike of someone/ something	You aren't buying that suit, are you?
those who....	an expression which refers to <i>those people who</i>	Those who participated in the questionnaire will be compensated.
this/these	used in expressions referring to current periods of time	this morning, this week, this Saturday, these days, this July, this year, this evening, this month, this afternoon
this	used when introducing a story or joke	Once upon a time there was this beautiful princess....

Short phrases		
this and that; this, that and the other	used when talking about a variety of things	So, what did you get up to today? Oh, I did this, that and the other .
this is it	used in reference to something which is expected to happen and does actually happen	This is it , guys, the swimming trials are finally here. We either make it or break it.
that's that	an emphatic expression used to say that something can't be changed	I said you can't go to the party and that's that .
just like that	an emphatic expression used to say something is done in a simple way or without much thought	Just like that , he packed his bags and caught the next flight out.
at that	used after a statement to emphasise what was just said or done	The style doesn't suit you, and it's probably too expensive at that .