This, that, these, those: further information

Referring back to something just said or done

We use 'that' when we respond to something which was just said or done.
For example:

"Let's go to lunch now." "That's a good idea."

"She's very unhappy at the moment." "Why's that?"

Emotional distance

As well as physical or time differences, we use this/that and these/those to indicate emotional or mental distance.

This and these indicate something positive or favourable.

That and those are for negative or unfavourable situations - there is a sense that we want to distance ourselves from something or someone.

Positive feeling	Negative feeling
I like this new friend of hers - I hope we can see her again.	I can't stand that woman! Don't do that! You know I don't like it.
These French films that the BBC hasbeen showing are great. I saw these great shoes when I was shopping on Saturday - I think I'll go back and buy them	Those neighbours of mine are so annoying - they play really loud music late at night. I don't like those new computers - I prefer the old ones.

'This' or 'it'

We can use both 'it' and 'this' as pronouns to refer back to something previously mentioned but 'this' is used for particular emphasis when there is something new or interesting:

We are going to employ more staff. This will make my job easier.

If there is more than one point or topic, 'it' refers to the first and 'this' refers to the last:

Ireland was the first country in the world to ban smoking in all indoor workplaces.	**It [Ireland] did this because partial bans weren't effective.**
Ireland was the first country in the world to ban smoking in all indoor workplaces.	**This [the smoking ban] was in March 2004.**

'This morning', etc.

'This' is usually used to talk about the present and near future but can also be used for the past and the more distant future with times of the day or year. For example:

I saw Sandrine this morning. [when the day isn't finished]

I had a great holiday this summer. [when the year isn't finished]

What shall we do this evening? [said earlier in the day]

I'm going to be really busy this week. [said at the beginning of the week]

We're going to Italy this winter. [said earlier in the year]

'One' and 'ones'

We use 'one' and 'ones' as pronouns:

Do you need a blue pen or a black one?
I prefer big cars to small ones.

We can use determiners with 'one':

Do you need this/that blue one?
Do you need this/that one?

I prefer this/that big one.

I prefer this/that one.

We can also use determiners with 'ones' although it is usually considered redundant and should be avoided.

To be avoided	Preferred
Do you need these/those ones?	**Do you need these/those?**
I prefer these/those ones.	**I prefer these/those.**

However, if we use an adjective, we need to use 'ones'.

Do you need these blue ones?
I prefer those big ones.

Also, 'ones' can be used if we are adding extra information, such as a location, or making a clear distinction between two things. For example:

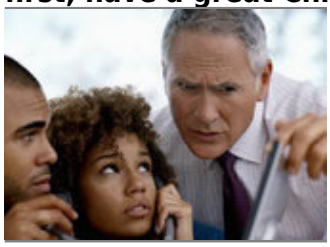
Do you need these ones on the table?
These are OK but I prefer those ones.

'This' and 'that' as adverbs

	Meaning	Examples
This	**to an extent or degree, often indicated**	**I'm not usually this busy. [as busy as I am at the moment]** **My son is about this tall now. [as tall as I'm indicating physically]**
That	**as much as suggested or imagined**	**"How was the meeting? I heard it lasted three hours."** **"Yes, it did. It was difficult to concentrate that long but it was productive."** **"I don't like the new manager - he's rude and too demanding."** **"Oh, he isn't that bad."**

Examples

Results were excellent this year. Let's continue in the same way next year but first, have a great Christmas, everyone.



Those figures are accurate but these ones here aren't right.

We did really well in Romania last year. This means we can now begin to expand into other Eastern European countries.

Those new regulations are causing problems for us.

"Can I have that one, please?"
"Yes, of course. And these are nice too. Would you like to try one?"

"I bought a new car."
"That's great. Shall we go for a drive?"

I like this idea that Jean-Louis had - what do you think?

"How was the weather in London?"
"Not that bad, actually - it only rained a little."

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