



RELATIVE CLAUSES

A short recap

RELATIVE PRONOUNS

- Who, whom, which, that, whose
- The choice of RP depends on whether you refer to:
 - a person, animal or thing
 - a subject or an object
 - a possessive meaning



WHO/THAT

- Refer to human beings

That's the man **who** broke my arm. (subject)

It was from a man **who** I know slightly. (object)

It was from a man whom I know slightly.

I met a friend **who** I went to school **with**.

I met a friend with whom I went to school. (formal)



WHICH/THAT

- Refers to a non-human subject or object of a relative clause

The heart is a muscle **which/that** pumps blood.
(S/O?)

The heart is a muscle (**which/that**) you should take care of. (S/O?)

The heart is a muscle **of which** you should take care.



WHOSE

- Used for possession by humans and animals

The man **whose** house burnt down got a stroke.

Compare:

He wrote a novel, the title **of which** I've forgotten.
(formal)

He wrote a novel, **whose** title I've forgotten.



DEFINING/NON-DEFINING RELATIVE CLAUSES

- The heart, which is a fascinating organ, is located in the thoracic cavity.
(=there are other fascinating organs)
- The heart which he received works well.
(=a specific heart)



DEFINING/NON-DEFINING RELATIVE CLAUSES

- Defining:

The doctors who were unhappy with their situation went on strike.

(=not all the doctors, just those who were unhappy)

- Non-defining

The doctors, who were unhappy with their situation, went on strike.

(=all the doctors)

Cf The doctors, who were members of MSF, went on strike. (=extra information)

Task: The doctors who were members of MSF went on strike.
(=who?)



DEFINING/NON-DEFINING RELATIVE CLAUSES

DEFINING

NON-DEFINING

WHO
WHOM
WHOSE
WHICH
THAT

WHO
WHOM
WHOSE
WHICH



NON-DEFINING RELATIVE CLAUSES

- The heart, which is a fascinating organ, is divided into four chambers.
(=correct)
- The heart, that is a fascinating organ, is divided into four chambers.
(=incorrect)

