

RELATIVE PRONOUNS, RELATIVE CLAUSES

Relative pronouns introduce a relative clause – either as **a subject** (who, which, that) or as **a direct object** (whom, which, that) or in the context of **a prepositional phrase** (*to whom, with which, by which*, etc). Nowadays we normally use **who** as an object.

We use **who** and **whom** for people and **which** for things and animals.
Or we can use **that** for people, animals and things.

Examples

... the house that my brother built
... the woman who discovered radium
... the man who sold me a stolen mobile phone
... the woman about whom we were talking (formal)
... the woman that we were talking about (informal)

Whose is the possessive form of **who** and it can be used with people, animals and things.

Examples

The man **whose** car I borrowed is very rich.
I chose the set **whose** price was reduced.

Relative clauses give us information about nouns.

A defining relative clause says which person, thing, animal or idea we are talking about.

Examples

The house that we rented in London was fully furnished.
Have you seen those people who we met on holiday?
A computer programmer is a person who / that designs computer programmes.

We can leave out the relative pronouns *who, which* or *that* when they are the object of the relative clause.

Examples

This is something (**that**) we use to move around the computer screen.
... information (**which**) you don't know about ... (less formal)

!!! Use *when* or *where* as relative pronouns after nouns which refer to a time or a place.

!!! Use *why* (or *that*) after the noun reason.

Examples

The room **where** the exam is taking place is ready.
I don't like days **when** it gets dark early.
That's the reason **why / that** I came.

A non-defining relative clause gives us additional information about a person, thing, animal or idea.

If we take the non-defining relative clause out of a sentence, the sentence will make sense without it.

Use commas with a non-defining relative clause and do not leave out the relative pronoun.

Examples:

My dog, **which is sleeping now**, doesn't bite.
Sportsmen, **who pay attention to their diet**, are not usually over-weight.

PRACTICE

A Complete the sentences with who, which, that or whose.

- 1 The man _____ is sitting in the corner is not very well.
- 2 You can pick up any strawberries _____ are red.
- 3 There are not many people _____ would like his job.
- 4 The events _____ occurred on Friday were rather alarming.
- 5 I don't like people _____ lie.
- 6 My computer, _____ hard disk is damaged, needs to be fixed.
- 7 How could a person _____ I love have done this?
- 8 The reporter asked her a lot of questions _____ she could not answer.

B Join the sentences using relative pronouns. Sometimes more than one answer is possible. Then underline the pronouns that can be left out.

- 1 There are two people at the door. They want to speak to you.
.....
- 2 That's the house! My dad was born there.
.....
- 3 Martin Amis is a famous author. His father was a writer too.
.....
- 4 Look at that boy. Emily is sitting next to him.
.....
- 5 One of the bins smells awful. You haven't emptied the bin for 3 weeks.
.....
- 6 This song is about a woman. Her life was very hard.
.....
- 7 This is the café. I told you it was good.
.....
- 8 I have two good friends. They always come when I need help.
.....

More practice on

<http://www.ego4u.com/en/cram-up/grammar/relative-clauses#exercises>

or

<http://perso.wanadoo.es/autoenglish/gr.relative.i.htm>

<http://perso.wanadoo.es/autoenglish/gr.nonrelat.i.htm>