

28 Relative clauses

Which, that, who, where, when, whose

- 3 Some examples of another type of relative clause:
*The computer **which/that** I bought last week doesn't work very well.*
*He's a singer **who/that** I really like.*

- 4 We can form relative clauses with this pattern:
noun + which/that/who + second subject + verb
*The book **which/that** I'm reading is great.*
*She's a person **who/that** everyone likes.*

In this kind of relative clause, there is another subject after **which, who** or **that**: *I* is the subject of *'m reading*; *everyone* is the subject of *likes*.

Notice that we do not use an object pronoun after the verb:

NOT ~~the book that I'm reading it ...~~
 NOT ~~a person who everyone likes her ...~~

- 5 We can use **where** and **when** in this kind of relative clause:
*It's a café **where** a lot of young people meet each other.*
*1999 was **the year when** I first travelled abroad.*
- 6 We can use **whose** + **noun** with or without a second subject:
*He's an actor **whose films** are always very popular.*
*He's an actor **whose films** I really like.*

Grammar in action

- 4 We use this kind of relative clause to give information that involves another thing or person in addition to the person or thing we are talking about:
*The book **that she was reading** was very boring.*



This sentence gives information both about 'the book' – it was boring – and about 'she' – she was reading it.

- 5 We use **where** to give information about a place. Here, the speaker is showing someone their home town:
*This is the house **where** I spent my childhood.*
- 6 We use **when** to give information about a time or a period of time. We might use it to explain what happens on a certain day:
*5 September is **the day when** the school year starts.*
- 7 We use **whose** + **noun** as a possessive form, instead of 'my', 'his', 'her', etc. to give information about people's possessions, family members, names, organizations, or creations:
*She's a writer **whose books** have sold millions.*
 (= her books have sold ...)

D The birthday party

Kate and Anna are talking before they go to a birthday party for their friend Carmen. Complete their conversation, using **who** or **which** and the phrases in the box.

she knows you've never met I always enjoy she didn't like you showed
 I haven't seen nobody else will get I bought I'm sure

- KATE Will I know many of the people at Carmen's party?
- ANNA Most of them, I think. But there will be some people who you've never met⁰ before. There will be people from work¹.
- KATE What have you bought her?
- ANNA I've bought her something she'll like³ her. It's a piece of jewellery I bought².
- KATE Are you going to wear that dress me the other day⁴?
- ANNA No, I'm going to wear the jacket last week⁵.
- KATE Will Jerry be there? He's someone for ages⁶.
- ANNA I don't know. He said something to Carmen I don't think they're friends any more⁷.
- KATE Oh that's a shame. He's a funny guy meeting⁸. Anyway, let's go ...

My holiday photos

Anthony is showing his holiday photographs to a friend. Correct the underlined parts of what he says.

- 0 These are some photos that I took them that I took on holiday.
- 1 This is someone who we met him at the hotel.
- 2 I took this on the day which we went to the cathedral.
- 3 That's a photo of us that another guest at the hotel he took
- 4 This is the hotel that we stayed
- 5 Those are some people from our group whose their names I can't remember
- 6 That's me in a hat that I bought it in a souvenir shop.
- 7 Those are some people who we made friends with them in a restaurant one night.
- 8 That's the man which bag got lost at the airport.



General knowledge quiz

Rewrite these questions for a general knowledge quiz, using relative clauses.
When you have done the exercise, answer the questions or try to find the answers.

- 0 Name this writer. She wrote the Harry Potter books.
Name the writer who wrote the Harry Potter books.
- 1 Name this building. It's the tallest in the world.
Name the building
- 2 Name this instrument. Louis Armstrong played it.
Name the instrument
- 3 Name this singer. People called him 'The King'.
Name the singer
- 4 Name this sport. William Webb Ellis invented it.
Name the sport
- 5 Name this building. The President of the US lives there.
Name the building
- 6 Name this director. He made the Star Wars films.
Name the director
- 7 Name this decade. The Beatles became famous then.
Name the decade
- 8 Name this scientist. He discovered penicillin.
Name the scientist
- 9 Name this country. Its capital city is Helsinki.
Name the country

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Question words

When, where, why, how, which, whose, who, what

1 Some examples of questions with these words:

Where are you going?

Which film are you going to see?

What did you do last weekend?

2 To form questions with **when, where, why** and **how**, we use these patterns:

question word + auxiliary (do, have, etc.) + subject + verb

When does the film start?

question word + be + subject

When was the exam?

3 To form questions with **which** and **whose**, we use this pattern:

which/whose + noun + auxiliary/be

Which course is he taking?

Whose coat is this?

We can also use a noun with **what**, with the same meaning as **which**:

What/Which sports do you play?

4 To form questions with **who, what, which** and **whose**, we can use both of the patterns in 2:

Who do you live with?

What is your address?

Which restaurant do you prefer?

Whose books are these?

(For more information on questions with **who, what, which** and **whose**, see unit 8 on p. 30.)

Grammar in action

1 We use **when** to ask about time and **where** to ask about places:

When did you arrive here?

Where are my keys?

2 We use **why** to ask for a reason:

Why are you wearing a coat?



3 We use **how** to ask about a process or a series of actions or events that produce a certain result. In this example, someone is asking what you do to make a certain meal:

How do you cook this dish?

4 We use **which** or **what** with a **plural noun** to ask someone to specify when there are a number of possibilities:

Which countries in Europe have you been to? ~ Italy, Spain, Germany, ...

We usually use **which** with a **singular noun** when we are asking someone to specify one thing from more than one possibility:

Which country in Europe have you been to the most? ~ Italy.

5 We use **whose** to ask who owns something:

Whose hat is this?



6 We use **what** to ask about things or actions and **who** to ask about people:

What do you want to eat?

Who is that man over there?

A The concert ticket

Complete the questions in this conversation by putting in the correct question words.

0 *What* s in this envelope? ~ A ticket.

1 ticket is it? ~ It's my ticket.

2 did you get a ticket for the concert? ~ I queued at the box office.

3 is the concert? ~ Next Friday.

4 are your seats? ~ At the back of the hall.

5 did you choose those seats? ~ Because it's going to be very loud.

6 are you going to the concert with? ~ Two of my friends.

7 friends are you going with? ~ Pete and Dave.

Decide whether the relative pronoun is correct or not.

1. The postman **which** works in this village is very old.
☐ correct ☐ not correct
2. The egg **which** is in the nest is brown.
☐ correct ☐ not correct
3. Where is the bed **who** was in the attic?
☐ correct ☐ not correct
4. The bottles **that** are lying on the floor are green.
☐ correct ☐ not correct
5. The cowboy **who** is wearing the red shirt is very funny.
☐ correct ☐ not correct

Complete with who, which, where or whose. Put a tick in the sentences you can leave the word out.

1. What about the girl _____ I saw you with just now?
2. I know a café _____ you can get really good ice cream.
3. I work in a restaurant _____ owner is Italian.
4. I play an electric guitar _____ it has a volume control.
5. It's very different from the job _____ I had last summer.

Rewrite the sentences using a relative pronoun.

1. A very famous architect designed the building.
The architect _____ designed the building is very famous.
2. I was taught Italian by a very good teacher.
The teacher _____ taught me Italian was very good.