

80 what, which, whose



1 what, which, whose

Wh- WORD	USE	EXAMPLE
what	asks about things or ideas	What does it do?
which	asks for a choice between a few things	Which programme do you want to watch?
whose	asks about possession/relationships	Whose bag is this? Whose sister is she?

2 which or what?

Which and what both ask about things and ideas.

- We use *which* when we are thinking of a small number of things:
Which colour do you want for the bedroom, blue, green or grey?
Which languages do you speak?
We can also use *which* (but not *what*) to ask about people:
Which member of the band do you like most?
We do not need a noun if it is clear what we are asking about:
'I speak four languages.' 'Really? Which do you speak?'
- *What* asks about more things than *which*. We often use *what* without a noun:
What's your favourite colour? What's on at the cinema this week? What does this thing do?
We can also use a noun after *what*: *What instrument do you play?*

3 Common uses of what

to ask about a person's work	What + do + noun + do?	What does your husband do? He's a builder.
to ask for a description	What + be + noun + like?	What's the weather like? It's cold and rainy. What's Jonathan like? He's very clever and he's quite shy.
to ask about likes and dislikes	What + do + noun + like?	What kind of films does Jonathan like? He likes South American films.



We don't use *like* in the answer to *What is he like?*:
✗ *He's like very clever.* ✓ *He's very clever.*

4 who or whose?

We use *who* to ask about people: *Who did you see at the party last night?*

We use *whose* (with or without a noun) to ask about possessions and relationships:
Whose is that bag on the table? (= Who does the bag belong to?)
Whose sister is she? (= Who is her sister?)



Who's and *whose* sound the same, but they are different. *Who's* means *who is* or *who has*:
Who's washing up today? (who is) *Who's seen the latest copy of 'Hello' magazine?* (who has)

Practice

These questions all come from a conversation at a party.

Choose the correct *wh*- word in each one.

0 <i>Who</i> / <i>What</i> was your favourite teacher?	5 <i>Whose</i> / <i>What</i> was she like?
1 <i>What</i> / <i>Which</i> did you study?	6 <i>What</i> / <i>Which</i> year did you graduate, 2007 or 2009?
2 <i>Which</i> / <i>What</i> is your name?	7 <i>Who</i> / <i>Whose</i> was your tutor for maths?
3 <i>Which</i> / <i>What</i> do you do now?	8 <i>Whose</i> / <i>Who's</i> group were you in for physics?
4 <i>Which</i> / <i>Who</i> university did you go to?	

GRAMMAR IN USE Now complete the conversation with questions from Exercise 1.

ANE It's a good party, isn't it?
BETH Yes. Alison always has good parties.
ANE How long have you known her?
BETH For years. We met at university.
ANE Really? (0)
BETH Kent University.
ANE That's interesting. I went there, too. (1)
BETH Maths and physics.
ANE I studied physics, too. (2)
BETH Simone Allen's group.

JANE I didn't have her. (3)
BETH She was really good. (4)
JANE It was Jack Granger. I didn't like him.
BETH No, I had him, too. He wasn't very good. (5)
JANE I teach now – I work in a school in London. How about you?
BETH I write computer programs – mostly for games.

GRAMMAR IN USE Read about Penny Knight. Then write questions for the answers below. Use the *wh*- word in brackets () .

I'm Lucy and the person I admire most is Penny Knight. She's my aunt but she's only five years older than me – she's my grandparents' youngest daughter. She's great – she's really friendly and lively, and she's very clever, too. She works for the games company Nintendo and designs computer games. She's married to Ryan – he's a sports teacher so she keeps fit.



0 *Who* is Penny Knight? She's Lucy's aunt. (who)
1 She's Lucy's grandparents' daughter. (whose)
2 She's very friendly and clever. (what)
3 Nintendo. (which)
4 She designs computer games. (what)
5 A sports teacher called Ryan. (who)

Correct the mistakes in these questions. Then write true answers.

What
0 Which do you do? I'm a student.
1 Who's class are you in?
2 Who school/college do you go to?
3 Which are you studying now?
4 Whose do you live with?
5 Which do you like doing?