

# 80 *what, which, whose*



Which button do I press?



What does this thing do?



Whose car is it?

## 1 *what, which, whose*

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

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



We don't use *like* in the answer to *What is he like?*:

~~X 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 <u>Who</u> What was your favourite teacher? | 5 Whose / What was she like?                        |
| 1 What / Which did you study?                 | 6 What / Which year did you graduate, 2007 or 2009? |
| 2 Which / What is your name?                  | 7 Who / Whose was your tutor for maths?             |
| 3 Which / What do you do now?                 | 8 Whose / Who's group were you in for physics?      |
| 4 Which / Who 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?                     | JANE I didn't have her. (3) .....                               |
| BETH Yes. Alison always has good parties.            | BETH She was really good. (4) .....                             |
| ANE How long have you known her?                     | JANE It was Jack Granger. I didn't like him.                    |
| BETH For years. We met at university.                | BETH No, I had him, too. He wasn't very good. (5) .....         |
| ANE Really? (0) ....                                 | JANE I teach now – I work in a school in London. How about you? |
| BETH Kent University.                                | BETH I write computer programs – mostly for games.              |
| ANE That's interesting. I went there, too. (1) ..... |   |
| BETH Maths and physics.                              |   |
| ANE I studied physics, too. (2) .....                |   |
| BETH Simone Allen's group.                           |   |

**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.

- |                                    |                       |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 0 <sup>What</sup> Which do you do? | <i>I'm a student.</i> |
| 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?         | .....                 |