

RELATIVE CLAUSES

who is used for people
who / whom / that are used for people

which / that are used for things
whose is used for people and things

Subject relative clause we can't omit the relative pronoun
eg The man ^{subject} [who normally works here] ^{relative pronoun} is ill

Object relative clause we can omit the relative pronoun
eg The man ^{object} [who ^{subject} you saw yesterday] is ill
→ The man you saw yesterday is ill

Exercise

Underline the relative clause and find if it is a subject or object relative clause

example The woman who I spoke to wasn't very polite. Object relative clause

1. I wouldn't stay in a hotel that refused to accept children
2. I don't understand people who hate animals
3. The television that they have designed is going to be very expensive
4. The stereo that I bought last week doesn't work properly
5. That man who complained is always making trouble
6. The assistant who you complained about has been moved.

Non defining relative clauses:

they give ^{extra} information about the subject being discussed, but it is not essential information. They are indicated by the use of commas before and after the clause.

We can't omit the introductory word (who... etc) and we can't

Example: A man, ^{replace it with that} who said he knew my father, asked me for money

who said he knew my father is an interesting fact but it is extra rather than essential information

Tom, who is very romantic, got engaged for the fourth time.

A defining relative clause gives necessary information. It is not put between commas.

Relative Adverbs

when } for defining and non-defining clauses
where }

why : for a defining clause.

eg There must be a reason why you said that

when: replaces in/on which

where: replaces in/at which

why: replaces for which



Compare: Defining - Non-defining relative clause

The travellers who knew about the floods took another road (Only those who knew).

The travellers, who knew about the floods took another road (all the travellers knew).

Prepositions with relative pronouns

- If we have a preposition we can put it:
- at the end of the relative clause
eg The man who/that I was talking to is my uncle
 - at the beginning of the relative clause
eg The man to whom I was talking is my uncle

If we omit the relative pronoun we put the preposition after the verb
eg The man I was talking to is my uncle

WHOSE: is used to indicate possession

eg There's the man whose wallet was stolen.

WHICH: can also refer to whole sentences

He tried to sing at the concert, and it was a disaster →

He tried to sing at the concert, which was a disaster.

This sort of non-defining clause refers to a whole sentence.