

# DEFINING RELATIVE CLAUSES

GRAMMAR

## RELATIVE CLAUSES

- **Relative clauses** are sentences which give information about someone or something previously mentioned (**antecedent**).

For example: I have a **sister** **who has got two dogs**.

- We use **relative pronouns** to introduce relative clauses.

For example: We found a hotel **which** is cheaper.

## RELATIVE PRONOUNS

- **As previously mentioned, relative pronouns are used to introduce relative clauses. Now, we will mention the most common relative pronouns.**

# WHO

- Who: this **relative pronoun** is used when the **antecedent** is a person.

- For example:

There are **people** **who** live in a mobile home.

There are **people** (**antecedent**) **who** (**relative pronoun**) live in a mobile home.

- **IMPORTANT!** This pronoun can be omitted when it isn't the subject of the relative clause. For instance:

These are the people ~~who~~ I met the other day.

These are the people I met the other day.

These are the people **who** play football every day. (The pronoun cannot be omitted here because it has the function of subject).

# WHICH

- Which: this **relative pronoun** is used when the **antecedent** is an object or an animal.

- For example:

We bought **a new house** **which** is bigger.

We bought **a new house (antecedent)** **which (relative pronoun)** is bigger.

- IMPORTANT! This pronoun can be omitted when it isn't the subject of the relative clause. For instance:

We adopted a new cat ~~which~~ I love.

We adopted a new cat I love.

We adopted a new cat **which** is black and white.

(The pronoun cannot be omitted here because it has the function of subject).

# THAT

- That: this **relative pronoun** is used to refer to animals, things or people.

- For example:

This is a **dog** **that** I will never forget.

This is a **dog (antecedent)** **that (relative pronoun)** I will never forget.

- **IMPORTANT!** This pronoun can be omitted when it isn't the subject of the relative clause. For instance:

This is a dog ~~that~~ I will never forget.

This is a dog I will never forget.

We saw a dog **that** was black and white. (The pronoun cannot be omitted here because it has the function of subject).

# WHERE

- This **relative pronoun** is used when **the antecedent** is a place. It cannot be omitted. It cannot be substituted by *that*.
- For example:  
That is the **university** **where** I want to study.  
That is the **university (antecedent)** **where (relative pronoun)** I want to study.

# WHEN

- This **relative pronoun** is used when the **antecedent** is a time sentence. For example:

Monday is **the day when** the exams started.



# WHOSE

- Whose is a **relative pronoun** used when the **antecedent** is a person. It expresses **possession**.
- For example:  
I met a **boy** **whose** mother is a lawyer.

# SUMMARY

| PRONOUN                            | EXAMPLE   |
|------------------------------------|---|
| Who (people)                       | <i>The woman <b>who lives next door</b> works in a bank.<br/>(La mujer <b>que vive en la casa de al lado</b> trabaja en un banco.)</i>    |
| Which (objects and animals)        | <i>The t-shirt <b>which I love</b> is clean.<br/>(La camiseta <b>que me encanta</b> está limpia.)</i>                                     |
| That (objects, animals and people) | <i>The laptop <b>that I bought</b> last week is broken.<br/>(El portátil <b>que compré</b> la semana pasada está roto.)</i>               |
| Where (places)                     | <i>That's the stadium <b>where Real Madrid plays</b>.<br/>(Aquél es el estadio <b>donde juega el Real Madrid</b>.)</i>                    |
| When (time)                        | <i>Summer is the season <b>when I'm happiest</b>.<br/>(El verano es la estación <b>en la que estoy más feliz</b>.)</i>                    |
| Whose (possession)                 | <i>He's a musician <b>whose albums have sold millions</b>.<br/>(El es un <b>músico cuyos álbumes han vendido millones de copias</b>.)</i> |

# PRACTICE

- Click [here](#) to do exercises about relative clauses.
- Click [here](#) for another exercise.
- Click [here](#) to go to the British Council explanation and exercises about relative pronouns.
- [Video quiz.](#)



THE END

A presentation by Blanca Mazo