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## RELATIVE PRONOUNS AND RELATIVE CLAUSES

A clause is a group of words containing a subject and a verb which form a sentence or part of a sentence. Relative clauses start with these relative pronouns:

*who, which, that, whose, where, when and why.*

### Defining relative clauses

- Relative clauses which tell us which particular person or thing the speaker is talking about are called defining relative clauses. They give essential information:

*The athletes who train the hardest will win the most medals.*

The relative clause tells us which athletes we are talking about.

### Non-defining relative clauses

- Relative clauses which give us extra information are called non-defining relative clauses:

*The American athletes, who trained harder than their competitors, won 12 gold medals.*

We already know which athletes (the American ones); *who trained harder than their competitors* does not tell us which athletes we are talking about; it just adds extra information.

There are differences in grammar:

defining relative clauses ...	non-defining relative clauses ...
don't have commas	use commas (or pauses in spoken English)
use the following relative pronouns: <i>who, which, whose, where, when and why</i>	use the following relative pronouns: <i>who, which, whose, where and when</i>
can use <i>that</i> instead of <i>who</i> or <i>which</i>	don't use <i>that</i>
<i>Who, which</i> or <i>that</i> can be omitted when they are the object of the clause: <i>The eye drops (-/which/that) the optician gave me should be used twice a day.</i>	The relative pronoun cannot be omitted.