

Language Focus



Inside the System

Relative Clauses

Relative clauses give us information about the person or thing mentioned. It gives detail information about noun in a sentence. We usually use a relative pronoun or adverb to start a defining relative clause: who, which, that, when, where or whose.

| Relative Pronouns | | | |
|---------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | Subject of the verb of the relative clause (cannot be omitted) | Object of the verb of the relative clause (can be omitted) | Possession (cannot be omitted) |
| Used for people | Who / that | Who / whom / that | whose |
| | There's the boy who / that started the fight. | Here's the woman (who/that) I told you about last week. | This is Mrs. Smith , whose daughter is in my class. |
| Used for things / animals | Which / that | Which / that | Whose / of which |
| | I saw a film which / that was very good. | This is the book (which/that) I read last week. | This is the house whose roof / the roof of which was destroyed. |

Who, whom, which or **that** can be omitted when there is a noun or personal pronoun between the relative pronoun and the verb, that is, when they are the relatives clause.

When **who, which**, etc. are subjects of the relative clause, they cannot be omitted.

The dress (**which/that**) you bought yesterday is very nice. (Which/That is the object and can be omitted.)

The man who called just now is my dentist. (Who is the subject and cannot be omitted.)

What can be used as subject or object or to emphasize a word or phrase. He didn't do what I told him.

That can be used instead of who, whom or which but is never used after commas or prepositions.

He's the one who / that gave me your address. That hotel, which (NOT : that) is by the sea, is where we stayed.

That usually follows superlatives and words such as: something, nothing, anything, all, none, many and few. There's nothing that he can't do.

Relative Adverbs

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|--------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Time Place Reason | When (= in/on/at which) | August is the month when a lot of tourists visit the place. |
| | Where (= in/at/on/to which) | That's the hotel where the President is staying. |
| | Why (= for which) | Lack of money is the reason (why) we are not going on holiday. |