

# Università di Cagliari



## Corso di Laurea in Economia e Gestione Aziendale

### Lingua Inglese

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# Relative pronouns

Relative pronouns: connect a subordinate clause to a preceding noun/noun phrase.

We use relative pronouns to introduce relative clauses.

The most common relative pronouns are **who**, **whom**, **whose**, **which**, and **that**.

Sometimes **when** and **where** can be used as relative pronouns as well.

They have:

- a subject case: *who*;
- a possessive case: *whose*;
- an object case: *whom*.

➔ They generally refer to people.

# Relative pronouns

**Whom** is falling into disuse except in formal written English. In expressions such as:

- **TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN;**
- *He didn't know to whom he had to address the letter. (he didn't know who he had to address the letter to).*

We sometimes use **whom** as the object of a verb or preposition:

- *This is George, whom you met at our house last year. (whom is the object of met)*

but nowadays we normally use **who**:

- *This is George, who you met at our house last year.*

**Which** and **that** are used as both subject and object when referring to inanimate nouns.

**That** can also refer to people.

# Relative pronouns

Occasionally, the relative adverbs "**when**" and "**where**" are also used as relative pronouns. For example:

- *Grandma remembers a time **when** radio shows were popular.*
- *I want to visit the island **where** my grandma was born.*

In these cases, "when" and "where" introduce clauses that describe a noun the refers to a time or place, making them work as relative pronouns in these sentences.

# Relative pronouns

<i>who</i>	people and sometimes pet animals	defining and non-defining
<i>which</i>	animals and things	defining and non-defining;
<i>that</i>	people, animals and things; <u>informal</u>	defining only
<i>whose</i>	possessive meaning; for people and animals usually;	defining and non-defining
<i>whom</i>	people in formal styles or in writing; often with a preposition; rarely in conversation; used instead of <i>who</i> if <i>who</i> is the object	defining and non-defining
where	places	Defining and non-defining
no relative pronoun	when the relative pronoun defines the object of the clause	defining only

# RELATIVE CLAUSES

We can use relative clauses to join two English sentences, or to give more information about something. The relative clause comes right after the noun/object to which it refers.

- *I bought a new car. It is very fast.*  
→ *I bought a new car which/that is very fast.*
- *She lives in New York. She likes living in New York.*  
→ *She lives in New York, which she likes.*

# RELATIVE CLAUSES

## Defining and Non-defining

A **defining relative clause** tells which noun we are talking about / what a person, thing or place is or does:

- *I like the woman who lives next door.*

(If I don't say 'who lives next door', then we don't know which woman I mean).

A **non-defining relative clause** gives us extra information about something. We don't need this information to understand the sentence.

- *I live in London, which has some fantastic parks.*

(Everybody knows where London is, so 'which has some fantastic parks' is extra information).

# RELATIVE CLAUSES

## Defining relative clauses:

### 1: The relative pronoun is the subject:

We can use 'who', 'which' or 'that'.

The relative clause can come after the subject or the object of the sentence.

We can't drop the relative pronoun.

For example when the clause is after the object of the first clause:

- *I'm looking for a secretary who / that can use a computer well.*
- *She has a son who / that is a doctor.*
- *We bought a house which / that is 200 years old.*
- *I sent a letter which / that arrived three weeks later.*

# RELATIVE CLAUSES

## ■ Defining relative clauses:

### ■ 1: The relative pronoun is the subject:

We can use 'who', 'which' or 'that'.

The relative clause can come after the subject or the object of the sentence.

We can't drop the relative pronoun.

When the clause is after the subject:

- *The people who / that live on the island are very friendly.*
- *The man who / that phoned is my brother.*
- *The camera which / that costs £100 is over there.*
- *The house which / that belongs to Julie is in London*

# RELATIVE CLAUSES

- **Defining relative clauses:**
- **2: The relative pronoun is the object:**

In this case we can drop the relative pronoun if we want to. Again, the clause can come after the subject or the object of the sentence. Here are some examples:

For example when the clause is after the object of the first clause:

- *She loves the chocolate (which / that) I bought.*
- *We went to the village (which / that) Lucy recommended.*
- *John met a woman (who / that) I had been to school with.*
- *The police arrested a man (who / that) Jill worked with.*

# RELATIVE CLAUSES

- **Defining relative clauses:**

- **2: The relative pronoun is the object:**

In this case we can drop the relative pronoun if we want to. Again, the clause can come after the subject or the object of the sentence. Here are some examples:

For example when the clause is after the subject:

- *The bike (which / that) I loved was stolen.*
- *The university (which / that) she likes is famous.*
- *The woman (who / that) my brother loves is from Mexico.*
- *The doctor (who / that) my grandmother liked lives in New York.*

# RELATIVE CLAUSES

## ■ Non-defining relative clauses:

We don't use 'that' in non-defining relative clauses, so we need to use 'which' if the pronoun refers to a thing, and 'who' if it refers to a person. We can't drop the relative pronoun in this kind of clause, even if the relative pronoun is the subject of the clause.

For example when the clause is after the subject of the first clause:

- *My boss, who is very nice, lives in Manchester.*
- *My sister, who I live with, knows a lot about cars.*
- *My bicycle, which I've had for more than ten years, is falling apart.*
- *My mother's house, which I grew up in, is very small.*

# RELATIVE CLAUSES

## ■ Non-defining relative clauses:

We don't use 'that' in non-defining relative clauses, so we need to use 'which' if the pronoun refers to a thing, and 'who' if it refers to a person. We can't drop the relative pronoun in this kind of clause, even if the relative pronoun is the subject of the clause.

For example when the clause is after the object of the first clause:

- *Yesterday I called our friend Julie, who lives in New York.*
- *The photographer called to the Queen, who looked annoyed.*
- *Last week I bought a new computer, which I don't like now.*
- *I really love the new Chinese restaurant, which we went to last night.*

# RELATIVE CLAUSES

Make one sentence by changing the sentence in italics into a defining relative clause. The relative pronoun can be the subject or the object of the relative clause.

- 1. *They found the money. I dropped the money.*

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- 2. *I broke the plate. The plate was a wedding present.*

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- 3. *The police arrested the man. I saw the man steal a handbag.*

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- 4. *The Queen fired the chef. We had met the chef.*

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- 1. *They found the money (which / that) I dropped.*

- 2. *I broke the plate which / that was a wedding present.*

- 3. *The police arrested the man (who / that) I saw steal a handbag.*

- 4. *The Queen fired the chef (who / that) we had met.*

# RELATIVE CLAUSES

- 5. *She wrote to her friend. Her friend lives in Vietnam.*

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- 6. *Jill ate the sandwich. The sandwich had tomato and cheese inside.*

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- 7. *His friend lives in Scotland. His friend is a lawyer.*

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- 8. *We called the secretary. I went to school with the secretary.*

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- 5. *She wrote to her friend who / that lives in Vietnam.*
- 6. *Jill ate the sandwich which / that had tomato and cheese inside.*
- 7. *His friend who / that is a lawyer lives in Scotland.*
- 8. *We called the secretary (who / that) I went to school with.*

# RELATIVE CLAUSES

- 9. *The CD is in my bag. The CD has Spanish music.*
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- 10. *The book is very interesting. The book is about Japanese culture.*
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- 11. *The bag was stolen. I bought the bag yesterday.*
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- 12. *He likes films. The films come from Asia.*
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- 9. *The CD which / that has Spanish music is in my bag.*

- 10. *The book which / that is about Japanese culture is very interesting.*

- 11. *The bag (which / that) I bought yesterday was stolen.*

- 12. *He likes films which / that come from Asia.*

# RELATIVE CLAUSES

- 13. *My nephew broke the plate. I received the plate as a present.*

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  - 14. *The chocolate was very old. We bought the chocolate last week.*

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  - 15. *The TV programme was very funny. Lucy recommended the TV programme.*

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  - 16. *The girl is on TV tonight. I met the girl yesterday.*

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- 13. *My nephew broke the plate (which / that) I received as a present.*
  - 14. *The chocolate (which / that) we bought last week was very old.*
  - 15. *The TV programme (which / that) Lucy recommended was very funny.*
  - 16. *The girl (who / that) I met yesterday is on TV tonight.*