

Relative clauses 1:
clauses with **who/that/which**

A

Look at this example sentence:

The woman **who lives next door** is a doctor.

relative clause

A *clause* is a part of a sentence. A *relative clause* tells us which person or thing (or what kind of person or thing) the speaker means:

- ☐ The woman **who lives next door** ... ('who lives next door' tells us which woman)
- ☐ People **who live in the country** ... ('who live in the country' tells us what kind of people)

We use **who** in a relative clause when we are talking about people (not things):

the woman – she lives next door – is a doctor

→ The woman **who lives next door** is a doctor.

we know a lot of people – they live in the country

→ We know a lot of people **who live in the country**.

- ☐ An architect is someone **who designs buildings**.
- ☐ What was the name of the person **who phoned you**?
- ☐ Anyone **who wants to apply for the job** must do so by Friday.

You can also use **that** (instead of **who**), but you can't use **which** for people:

- ☐ The woman **that lives next door** is a doctor. (*not* the woman **which**)

Sometimes you must use **who** (*not* that) for people – see Unit 95.

B

When we are talking about things, we use **that** or **which** (*not* who) in a relative clause:

where is the cheese? – it was in the fridge

→ Where is the cheese **{ that / which }** was in the fridge?

- ☐ I don't like stories **that have unhappy endings**. (*or* stories **which** have ...)
- ☐ Barbara works for a company **that makes furniture**. (*or* a company **which** makes furniture)
- ☐ The machine **that broke down** is working again now. (*or* The machine **which** broke down)

That is more usual than **which**, but sometimes you must use **which** – see Unit 95.

C

What = 'the thing(s) that'. Compare **what** and **that**:

- ☐ **What** happened was my fault. (= the thing that happened)
- ☐ Everything **that** happened was my fault. (*not* Everything **what** happened)
- ☐ The machine **that** broke down is now working again. (*not* The machine **what** broke down)

D

Remember that in relative clauses we use **who/that/which**, not **he/she/they/it**:

- ☐ I've never spoken to the woman **who lives next door**. (*not* the woman **she** lives)

Exercises

Unit 92

92.1 In this exercise you have to explain what some words mean. Choose the right meaning from the box and then write a sentence with *who*. Use a dictionary if necessary.

he/she	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> steals from a shop designs buildings doesn't believe in God is not brave 	he/she	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> buys something from a shop pays rent to live in a house or flat breaks into a house to steal things expects the worst to happen
--------	--	--------	--

- (an architect) An architect is someone who designs buildings.
- (a burglar) A burglar is someone
- (a customer)
- (a shoplifter)
- (a coward)
- (an atheist)
- (a pessimist)
- (a tenant)

92.2 Make one sentence from two. Use *who/that/which*.

- A girl was injured in the accident. She is now in hospital.
The girl who was injured in the accident is now in hospital.
- A waitress served us. She was impolite and impatient.
The
- A building was destroyed in the fire. It has now been rebuilt.
The
- Some people were arrested. They have now been released.
The
- A bus goes to the airport. It runs every half hour.
The

92.3 Complete the sentences. Choose the best ending from the box and change it into a relative clause.

he invented the telephone	it makes furniture
she runs away from home	it gives you the meaning of words
they stole my car	it can support life
they were on the wall	it cannot be explained

- Barbara works for a company that makes furniture.
- The book is about a girl
- What happened to the pictures?
- A mystery is something
- The police have caught the men
- A dictionary is a book
- Alexander Bell was the man
- It seems that the earth is the only planet

92.4 Are these sentences right or wrong? Correct them where necessary.

- I don't like stories who have unhappy endings. stories that have
- What was the name of the person who phoned you? OK
- Where's the nearest shop who sells newspapers?
- The driver which caused the accident was fined £500.
- Do you know the person that took these photographs?
- We live in a world what is changing all the time.
- Dan said some things about me that were not true.
- What was the name of the horse it won the race?

Relative clauses 2: clauses with and without **who/that/which**

Look at these example sentences from Unit 92:

- The woman **who** lives next door is a doctor. (or The woman **that** lives ...)
- The woman lives next door. **who** (= the woman) is the *subject*

- Where is the cheese **that** was in the fridge? (or the cheese **which** was ...)
- The cheese was in the fridge. **that** (= the cheese) is the *subject*

You must use **who/that/which** when it is the subject of the relative clause. So you cannot say 'The woman lives next door is a doctor' or 'Where is the cheese was in the fridge?'.

Sometimes **who/that/which** is the *object* of the verb. For example:

- The woman **who** I wanted to see was away on holiday.
- who** (= the woman) is the *object*
I wanted to see **the woman**
I is the *subject*

- ☐ Have you found the keys **that** you lost? that (= the keys) is the *object*
- You lost **the keys.** you is the *subject*

When **who/that/which** is the object, you can leave it out. So you can say:

- ☐ The woman I wanted to see was away. or The woman **who** I wanted to see ...
- ☐ Have you found the keys you lost? or ... the keys **that** you lost?
- ☐ The dress Liz bought doesn't fit her very well. or The dress **that** Liz bought ...
- ☐ Is there anything I can do? or ... anything **that** I can do?

Note that we say:

the keys you lost (*not* the keys you lost them)
the dress Liz bought (*not* the dress Liz bought it)

Note the position of prepositions (in/to/for etc.) in relative clauses:

Tom is talking **to** a woman – do you know her?

→ Do you know the woman (who/that) Tom is talking to ?

I slept **in** a bed last night – it wasn't very comfortable

→ The bed (that/which) I slept in last night wasn't very comfortable.

- ☐ Are these the books you were looking for? *or* ... the books **that/which** you were ...
- ☐ The woman **he fell in love with** left him after a month. *or* The woman **who/that** he ...
- ☐ The man **I was sitting next to on the plane** talked all the time. *or*
The man **who/that** I was sitting next to ...

Note that we say:

the books you were looking for (*not* the books you were looking for them)

You cannot use **what** in sentences like these (see also Unit 92C):

- ❑ Everything (that) they said was true. (not Everything what they said)
❑ I gave her all the money (that) I had. (not all the money what I had)

What = 'the thing(s) that':

- Did you hear **what they said**? (= the things that they said)

Exercises

Unit 93

93.1 In some of these sentences you need **who** or **that**. Correct the sentences where necessary.

- 1 The woman lives next door is a doctor. The woman who lives next door
- 2 Have you found the keys you lost? OK
- 3 The people we met last night were very nice. _____
- 4 The people work in the office are very nice. _____
- 5 The people I work with are very nice. _____
- 6 What have you done with the money I gave you? _____
- 7 What happened to the money was on the table? _____
- 8 What's the worst film you've ever seen? _____
- 9 What's the best thing it has ever happened to you? _____

93.2 What do you say in these situations? Complete each sentence with a relative clause.

- 1 Your friend lost some keys. You want to know if he has found them. You say:
Have you found the keys you lost ?
- 2 A friend is wearing a dress. You like it. You tell her:
I like the dress _____ .
- 3 A friend is going to see a film. You want to know the name of the film. You say:
What's the name of the film _____ ?
- 4 You wanted to visit a museum. It was shut when you got there. You tell a friend:
The museum _____ was shut when we got there.
- 5 You invited some people to your party. Some of them couldn't come. You tell someone:
Some of the people _____ couldn't come.
- 6 Your friend had to do some work. You want to know if she has finished. You say:
Have you finished the work _____ ?
- 7 You hired a car. It broke down after a few miles. You tell a friend:
The car _____ broke down after a few miles.
- 8 You stayed at a hotel. Tom had recommended it to you. You tell a friend:
We stayed at a hotel _____ .

93.3 Complete each sentence using a relative clause with a preposition. Choose from the box.

we went to a party last night	you can rely on Gary	we were invited to a wedding
I work with some people	I applied for a job	you told me about a hotel
you were looking for some books	I saw you with a man	

- 1 Are these the books you were looking for ?
- 2 Unfortunately we couldn't go to the wedding _____ .
- 3 I enjoy my job. I like the people _____ .
- 4 What's the name of that hotel _____ ?
- 5 The party _____ wasn't very enjoyable.
- 6 I didn't get the job _____ .
- 7 Gary is a good person to know. He's somebody _____ .
- 8 Who was that man _____ in the restaurant?

93.4 Put in **that** or **what** where necessary. If the sentence is already complete, leave the space empty.

- 1 I gave her all the money _____ I had. (all the money **that** I had *is also correct*)
- 2 Did you hear what they said?
- 3 They give their children everything _____ they want.
- 4 Tell me _____ you want and I'll try to get it for you.
- 5 Why do you blame me for everything _____ goes wrong?
- 6 I won't be able to do much, but I'll do _____ I can.
- 7 I won't be able to do much, but I'll do the best _____ I can.
- 8 I don't agree with _____ you've just said.
- 9 I don't trust him. I don't believe anything _____ he says.

Relative clauses 3: whose/whom/where

A Whose

We use **whose** in relative clauses instead of **his/her/their**:

we saw some people – **their** car had broken down

→ We saw some people **whose** car had broken down.

We use **whose** mostly for people:

- A widow is a woman **whose** husband is dead. (her husband is dead)
- What's the name of the man **whose** car you borrowed? (you borrowed his car)
- I met someone **whose** brother I went to school with. (I went to school with his/her brother)

Compare **who** and **whose**:

- I met a man **who** knows you. (he knows you)
- I met a man **whose** sister knows you. (his sister knows you)

B Whom

Whom is possible instead of **who** when it is the *object* of the verb in the relative clause (like the sentences in Unit 93B):

- The woman **whom** I wanted to see was away. (I wanted to see her)

You can also use **whom** with a preposition (to whom / from whom / with whom etc.):

- The people **with whom** I work are very nice. (I work with them)

But we do not often use **whom** in spoken English. We usually prefer **who** or **that**, or nothing (see Unit 93). So we usually say:

- The woman I wanted to see ... or The woman **who/that** I wanted to see ...
- The people I work with ... or The people **who/that** I work with ...

C Where

You can use **where** in a relative clause to talk about a place:

the restaurant – we had dinner **there** – it was near the airport

→ The restaurant **where** we had dinner was near the airport.

- I recently went back to the town **where** I grew up.
(or ... the town I grew up in or ... the town **that** I grew up in)
- I would like to live in a place **where** there is plenty of sunshine.

D We say:

the day / the year / the time etc. { something happens or
that something happens

- Do you remember the day (that) we went to the zoo?
- The last time (that) I saw her, she looked fine.
- I haven't seen them since the year (that) they got married.

E We say:

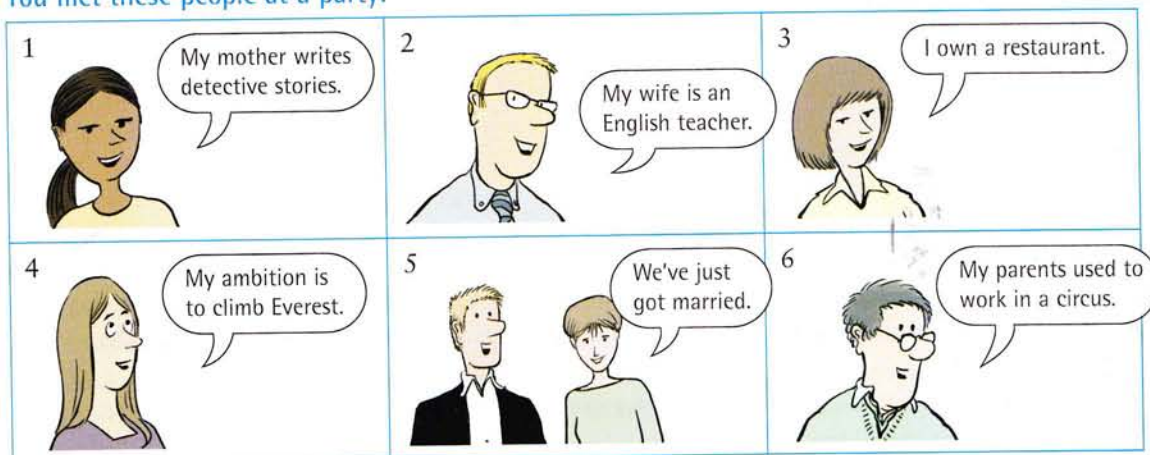
the reason { something happens or
that/why something happens

- The reason I'm phoning you is to ask your advice.
(or The reason **that** I'm phoning / The reason **why** I'm phoning)

Exercises

Unit 94

94.1 You met these people at a party:



The next day you tell a friend about these people. Complete the sentences using **who** or **whose**.

- 1 I met somebody whose mother writes detective stories
- 2 I met a man
- 3 I met a woman
- 4 I met somebody
- 5 I met a couple
- 6 I met somebody

94.2 Read the situations and complete the sentences using **where**.

- 1 You grew up in a small town. You went back there recently. You tell someone this.
I recently went back to the small town where I grew up
- 2 You want to buy some postcards. You ask a friend where you can do this.
Is there a shop near here
- 3 You work in a factory. The factory is going to close down next month. You tell a friend:
The factory is going to close down next month.
- 4 Sue is staying at a hotel. You want to know the name of the hotel. You ask a friend:
Do you know the name of the hotel
- 5 You play football in a park on Sundays. You show a friend the park. You say:
This is the park on Sundays.

94.3 Complete each sentence using **who/whom/whose/where**.

- 1 What's the name of the man whose car you borrowed?
- 2 A cemetery is a place people are buried.
- 3 A pacifist is a person believes that all wars are wrong.
- 4 An orphan is a child parents are dead.
- 5 What was the name of the person to you spoke on the phone?
- 6 The place we spent our holidays was really beautiful.
- 7 This school is only for children first language is not English.
- 8 The woman with he fell in love left him after a month.

94.4 Use your own ideas to complete these sentences. They are like the examples in Sections D and E.

- 1 I'll always remember the day I first met you
- 2 I'll never forget the time
- 3 The reason was that I didn't know your address.
- 4 Unfortunately I wasn't at home the evening
- 5 The reason is that they don't need one.
- 6 was the year