

# RELATIVE CLAUSE

## DEFINING RELATIVE CLAUSE

1. **'who' or 'that':** 'who' or 'that' is possible. But 'that' is often used after the words: **all, everyone, everybody, no one, nobody, and those:**  
Everyone who knows him likes him.
2. **'whom' is very formal and only used in written English, more often we use 'who' and 'that' to replace 'whom' in speaking:**  
The man to whom you are speaking is my brother.
3. **In formal English, the preposition is placed before the relative pronoun, and in that case, 'whom' is the only choice:**  
The man to *whom* I spoke is very nice.
4. **Possessive Relative pronoun => 'whose' is the only form:**  
People whose applications are accepted will be interviewed.
5. **Between 'which' and 'that' => 'which' is more commonly used. However, we will use 'that', but not 'which' after the following words: all, everything, little, much, none, no and compounds of 'no', after superlatives:**  
All the apples that are fallen will be picked up.  
This is the best hotel that I know so far.
6. **'Whose + clause' is accepted. But usually, we change it into 'with + phrase':**  
A house whose walls are made of glass => A house with glass walls.
7. **Relative 'when', 'where', 'why':**
  - a. **'when' can be replaced by 'in/ on which' (used of time)**  
The year when (= in which) he was born  
The day when (= on which) they arrived.
  - b. **'where' can be replaced by 'in/ at which' (used of place)**  
The hotel where (= in/ at which) they were staying.
  - c. **'why' can be replaced by 'for which':**  
The reason why he refused ...
8. **Cleft sentence: It + be + noun/ pronoun + defining relative clause:**  
It was Tom who helped us.  
It was Ann that I saw.  
But:  
**When the object is a Proper Noun, 'that' is more used:**  
It is the manager that I want to see.  
**When the object is not Person, 'that' is more used:**  
It is speed that causes accidents, not bad roads.
9. **Relative clause can be replaced by Infinitive or Participle:**
  - a. **Infinitive can be used after the words: 'the last', 'the only', and after Superlatives:**  
The last man to leave the ship = The last man who leaves the ship.  
The only one to understand = The only one who understands
  - b. **Remember we can use infinitive to replace the Relative Clause when it is in the subjective case. If it is the objective case, we cannot.**  
The first man that we saw => The first man to see (incorrect)  
=> the first man that was seen (correct)  
=> The first man to be seen (correct)
  - c. **When there is an idea of Purpose/ Permission:**

He has a lot of books to read. (He has a lot of books that he can read)

- d. **Participles can be used if the verb in the Relative Clause is in the Continuous tense:**

People who are waiting for the bus should line up.

People waiting for the bus should line up.

- e. **Participles can be used if the Relative Clause expresses the Habitual/continuous action:**

Passengers who travel on this bus should buy tickets over there.

Passengers travelling on this bus should buy tickets over there.

But:

Passengers, travelling on this bus, should buy tickets over there. (not a habit)

- f. **Participles can be used when the verb in the relative clause expresses the wish, desire, expectation, ...**

People who wish to go on the tour => People wishing to go on the tour

Fans who hope to have a look at the singer => Fans hoping to have a look ...

### **NON-DEFINING RELATIVE CLAUSE**

10. **Object of a preposition: whom**

The relative pronoun cannot be omitted. The preposition is normally placed before 'whom':

Mr. David, for whom I was working, was very generous.

11. **If the relative clause contains an expression of time/ place, the preposition will remain at the end:**

Peter, with whom I played tennis on Sundays, was better than me. (incorrect)

Peter, whom I played tennis with on Sundays, was better than me. (correct)

12. **The expressions: all, both, few, most, several, some ... + of + whom/ which -> This form can be used for people and things**

Her sons, both of whom work in the city, phones her every day.

He goes with his friends, few of whom are nice.

The buses, most of which are old, should be thrown away.

I eat the apples, some of which are rotten.

I talked to ten applicants, three of whom are excellent.

13. **Which (subjective case) in non-defining clause. 'that' is not used in this case:**

The house, which costs 1 million dollars, has been on sale for long.

14. **Which (objective) in non-defining clause cannot be omitted. 'that' cannot be replaced:**

She gave me the coat, which she made herself.

This book, which you can get at the bookstore, is very cheap.

15. **Object of a preposition: the preposition comes before 'which', or at the end (more formally)**

Bien Hoa city, through which we will be driving, is an exciting city.

16. **'which' used together with phrasal verb:**

The phrasal verbs such as: look after, look forward, put up with ... cannot not be separated.

This house, which I have looked after for years, satisfies me a lot.

### **CONNECTIVE RELATIVE CLAUSE**

The pronouns are 'who', 'whom', 'whose', 'which'.

Commas are used as it is used with non-defining clauses. Connective clauses do not describe their nouns but continue the story.

17. **Connective relative clauses are usually placed after the object of the main verb.**

I told Peter, who said it wasn't his business.

18. **Connective relative clauses are placed after the preposition + noun:**

I throw the ball to Tom, who throws it to Ann.

19. **Connective relative clauses can be replaced by and/ but + he/ she ...**

I throw the ball to Tom, and he throws it to Ann.

20. **Connective clause can be used with the expressions: one/ two/ .../ few/ several/ some + of + whom/ which:**

The clock strikes thirteen, which makes everyone laugh.

21. **'what' (relative pronoun) and 'which' (connective relative):**

What = the thing that/ the things that ...

What we saw is terrible -> the thing/ things that we saw is terrible.

He said he had no money, which is not true.

What refers to nothing in the sentence.

Which refers to the whole previous idea of the sentence.

22. **The importance of Commas in relative clause:**

The travellers who know about the floods take another road. (Only some of them know about the floods and use another way)

The travellers, who know about the floods, take another road. (All of them know, and all of them take another road)

23. **'whoever', and 'whichever' can mean 'the one who', 'he who', 'she who', ...**

Whoever gains the most points wins the competition.

Whichever of them gains the most points wins.

24. **Whatever, Whenever, and Wherever:**

You can eat whatever you like.

When you are grown up, you can watch whatever program you like.

25. **'whatever you do' is often placed before or after the request/ command to emphasize the importance:**

Whatever you do, don't tell my name.

26. **'however' is an adverb of degree, and is used together with an adjective/ adverb:**

I would like a room of my own, however small it is.

However hard I work, she is not satisfied.

27. **'whatever', 'wherever' -> can indicate the speaker's ignorance or indifference:**

He lives in Hollywood, wherever that is. (I don't know where it is, and I'm not interested)

He says he is a director, whatever that is. (I don't know what it is, and I don't care)

## EXERCISES

- I. **Combine the sentences together:**

1. This house is very modern. It has television and an electronic washing machine.
2. That man seems lonely. His wife and family are away.
3. Dumas was a famous French novelist. He wrote the Three Musketeers.
4. He is a reliable fellow. I can trust him with anything.
5. That mountain is difficult to climb. It has many dangerous slopes.

6. Those prize pigeons had been stolen. They were very valuable.
7. Our dog Spot is seven years old. He is a great favourite of the family.
8. The lecturer tonight was very interesting. He came from Cambridge.
9. Twelfth Night is a famous comedy. It was written by Shakespeare.
10. This number has been very warm. That is very unusual in this country.

**II. Combine the sentences of the following pair of sentences:**

1. He will have to get up early. He won't like it.
2. I've got to entertain my mother-in-law. I can't stand her.
3. The driver has driven a car for 20 years. His license has just been endorsed.
4. The worries have aged him. He has had these worries.
5. Lewis Carroll was really a mathematician. He wrote Alice in Wonderland.
6. The firm has dispensed with his service. He has been employed there for 30 years.
7. The rat in the trap. It ate the cheese. Mary bought the cheese.

**III. Express differently, by means of Relative Clauses:**

1. This is a book on zoology; there is none better.
2. The reason for his silence is not known.
3. I ended up by making a speech, and I hadn't wanted to.
4. My sister is quite mad to want to be an actress, for she has not the least talent.
5. Here is a girl with real talent and she really ought to have gone in for the theater.

**IV. Rewrite the following sentences so that each contains a non-defining relative clause.**

1. Shakespeare was born at Stratford and wrote many plays.
2. The Portuguese sailor, Magellan, gave his name to the famous straits.
3. The paintings by Vermeer in the Art Gallery are insured for a large amount.
4. This newly published book was recently summarized in a Sunday paper.
5. Liverpool is a busy port containing miles of docks.

**V. Reconstruct the following sentences, using a Relative Pronoun as a Connective:**

1. He walked along the wall on his hands, and that was a very difficult thing to do.
2. He has three sons, and they all work in the same office.
3. He studied hard in his youth, and that contributed to his success in later life.
4. They have four children, and they all go to the grammar school.
5. He passed his exam with honors, and this made his parents very proud of him.

**VI. Choose the correct answers:**

1. Yoko told me about students \_\_\_\_ have taken the entrance exam 13 times.  
 A. who C. which  
 B. whom D. P
2. The secretary \_\_\_\_ I talked to didn't know where the meeting was.  
 A. which C. that  
 B. whom D. P
3. You need to talk to a person \_\_\_\_ you can trust. You will feel better if you do.  
 A. whose C. whom  
 B. which D. P
4. Bob is the kind of person to \_\_\_\_ one can talk about anything.  
 A. who C. that  
 B. whom D. him
5. He is a person \_\_\_\_ friends trust him.  
 A. who B. his

- C. that D. whose
6. I am looking for an electric can opener \_\_\_\_\_ also can sharpen knives.  
A. who C. that  
B. which D. þ
7. People \_\_\_\_\_ live in glass houses shouldn't throw stones.  
A. who C. which  
B. whom D. þ
8. The problems \_\_\_\_\_ Tony has seem insurmountable.  
A. what C. that  
B. he D. þ
9. The man \_\_\_\_\_ I introduced you to last night may be the next president of the university.  
A. which C. that  
B. whom D. þ
10. Cathy is trustworthy. She's a person upon \_\_\_\_\_ you can always depend.  
A. who C. that  
B. whom D. þ
11. Your career should focus on a field in \_\_\_\_\_ you are genuinely interested.  
A. which C. that  
B. what D. þ

**VII. Choose the correct answers:**

1. Ms. Helen, \_\_\_\_\_ teaches linguistics at the university, recently received recognition for her research on the use of gestures in communication.  
who that  
whom þ  
which
2. A woman \_\_\_\_\_ teaches linguistics at the university received an award for outstanding research.  
who that  
whom þ  
which
3. The earth, \_\_\_\_\_ is the fifth largest planet in the solar system, is the third planet from the sun.  
who that  
whom þ  
which
4. A grant of \$1.5 million was awarded to Dr. Sato, \_\_\_\_\_ has impressed the scientific community with his research on the common cold.  
who that  
whom þ  
which
5. The award for the Most Valuable Player was won by a player \_\_\_\_\_ the coaches and the entire team respect.  
A. who D. that  
B. whom E. þ  
C. which
6. The award was won by Dennis Johnson, \_\_\_\_\_ the coach highly respects.  
who whom

which

þ

that

7. My accountant, \_\_\_\_ understands the complexities of the tax system, is doing my taxes this year.  
A. who D. that  
B. whom E. þ  
C. which
8. The school board voted to close a neighborhood elementary school. The decision, \_\_\_\_ affected over 200 students, was not warmly received in the community.  
A. who D. that  
B. whom E. þ  
C. which
9. Our office needs a secretary \_\_\_\_ knows how to use various word processing programs.  
A. who D. that  
B. whom E. þ  
C. which
10. The winner of the Nobel Prize in physics dedicated the honor to his high school physics teacher, \_\_\_\_ had been an inspiration during his early years.  
A. who D. that  
B. whom E. þ  
C. which
11. The consultant \_\_\_\_ was hired to advise us never really understood our situation.  
A. who D. that  
B. whom E. þ  
C. which
12. I gave the check to Oliver, \_\_\_\_ promptly cashed it and spent all the money before the day was out.  
A. who D. that  
B. whom E. þ  
C. which
13. The check \_\_\_\_ I gave Oliver was for work he'd done for me.  
A. who D. that  
B. whom E. þ  
C. which

**VIII. Choose the correct answer:**

1. "Who is eligible for the scholarship?" "Anyone \_\_\_\_ scholastic record is above average can apply for the scholarship."  
A. who has a C. who's a  
B. has a D. whose
2. Dr. Sales is a person \_\_\_\_.  
A. in whom I don't have much confidence  
B. in that I don't have much confidence  
C. whom I don't have much confidence in him  
D. I don't have much confidence
3. "Is April twenty-first the day \_\_\_\_?" "No, the twenty-second."  
A. you'll arrive then B. when you'll arrive



- C. is standing  
D. who he is standing
17. "Do you have the book \_\_\_\_ the teacher?" "Yes, I do."  
A. that it belongs to  
B. to which belongs to  
C. to which belongs  
D. that belongs to
18. The voters were overwhelmingly against the candidate \_\_\_\_ proposals called for higher taxes.  
A. who his  
B. whose  
C. whom he had  
D. that his
19. "Do you remember Mrs. Helen, \_\_\_\_ taught us English composition?" "I certainly do."  
A. who  
B. whom  
C. that  
D. which
20. I have three brothers, \_\_\_\_ are businessmen.  
A. that all of them  
B. who they all  
C. all of whom  
D. who all of them

**IX. Choose the correct answer:**

1. "Were you able to locate the person \_\_\_\_ wallet you found?" "Luckily, yes."  
A. which  
B. that his  
C. whose  
D. that's
2. Some fish is frozen, but \_\_\_\_ is best.  
A. fish is fresh  
B. fresh fish  
C. fish fresh  
D. fresh fish is caught
3. "Why do you get up at 4:00 a.m.?" "Because it's the only time \_\_\_\_ without being interrupted."  
A. when I can work on my book  
B. when I can work on my book at  
C. when I can work on my book then  
D. at when I can work on my book
4. "You seem so happy today." "I am. You are looking at a person \_\_\_\_ has just been accepted into medical school."  
A. who  
B. who she  
C. whom she  
D. whom
5. "The movie \_\_\_\_ last night was terrific." "What's it about?"  
A. I went  
B. I went to it  
C. I went to  
D. that I went
6. Many people lost their homes in the earthquake. The government needs to establish more shelters to care for those \_\_\_\_ have homes.  
A. who doesn't  
B. who don't  
C. which doesn't  
D. which don't
7. The problem \_\_\_\_ never occurred.  
A. I hadn't expected it  
B. who I had expected  
C. that I had expected it  
D. I had expected
8. I had to drive to the factory to pick up my brother, \_\_\_\_ car wouldn't start.  
A. who his  
B. who  
C. who's  
D. whose
9. I read a book about Picasso, \_\_\_\_.  
A. is a Spanish painter  
B. a Spanish painter





