

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 London** . . . (“who live in London” tells us what kind of people)

We use *who* in a relative clause when we are talking about people (not things). We use *who* instead of *he/she/they*:

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 London
 ↓
 → We know a lot of people **who** live in London.

- An architect is someone **who** designs buildings.
- What was the name of the man **who** lent you the money?
- Anyone **who** is interested in the job must apply before next Friday.

You can also use *that* (instead of *who*):

- The man **that** lives next door is very friendly.

But sometimes you must use *who* (*not that*) for people – see Unit 92.

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

- I don't like stories **that** have unhappy endings. (*or* stories **which** have)
- Barbara works for a company **that** makes washing machines.
(*or* a company **which** makes)
- The machine **that** broke down has now been repaired.
(*or* The machine **which** broke down)

That is more usual than *which*. But sometimes you must use *which* (*not that*) – see Unit 92.

C

You cannot use *what* in sentences like these:

- Everything **that** happened was my fault. (*not* Everything **what** happened)

What = the thing(s) that:

- **What** happened was my fault. (= the thing that happened)

Exercises

89.1 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 store designs buildings doesn't believe in God is not brave 	he/she	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> buys something from a store pays rent to live in a house or an apartment breaks into a house to steal things
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1. (an architect) An architect is someone who designs buildings.
2. (a burglar) A burglar is someone _____.
3. (a customer) _____.
4. (a shoplifter) _____.
5. (a coward) _____.
6. (an atheist) _____.
7. (a tenant) _____.

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

1. A girl was injured in the accident. She is now in the hospital.
The girl who was injured in the accident is now in the hospital.
2. A man answered the phone. He told me you were away.
The man _____.
3. A waitress served us. She was very impolite and impatient.
The _____.
4. A building was destroyed in the fire. It has now been rebuilt.
_____.
5. Some people were arrested. They have now been released.
The _____.
6. A bus goes to the airport. It runs every half hour.
_____.

89.3 Complete the sentences. Choose the most appropriate ending from the box and make it into a relative clause.

he invented the telephone	it makes washing machines
she runs away from home	it gives you the meanings of words
they are never on time	it won the race
they stole my car	it can support life
they were on the wall	it cannot be explained

1. Barbara works for a company that makes washing machines _____.
2. The book is about a girl _____.
3. What was the name of the horse _____?
4. The police have caught the men _____.
5. Alexander Graham Bell was the man _____.
6. What happened to the pictures _____?
7. A mystery is something _____.
8. A dictionary is a book _____.
9. I don't like people _____.
10. It seems that Earth is the only planet _____.