

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)
- 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 (see Unit 90B):

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

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

- The woman **with whom** he fell in love left him after a few weeks. (he fell in love with her)

But we do not often use **whom** in spoken English. We usually prefer **who** or **that**, or nothing (see Unit 90). So we usually say:

- The man I saw . . . *or* The man **who/that** I saw . . .

For **whom**, see also Units 92–93.

C

Where

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

the hotel – we stayed **there** – wasn't very clean
 → The hotel **where** we stayed wasn't very clean.

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

D

We say: the day / the year / the time (etc.) { something happens *or* that something happens

- Do you still remember the day (that) we first met?
- 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 calling you is to invite you to a party. (*or* The reason **that** I'm calling . . . / The reason **why** I'm calling . . .)

Exercises

91.1 You met these people at a party:

1  My mother writes detective stories.	2  My wife is an English teacher.	3  I own a restaurant.
4  My ambition is to climb Mt. Everest.	5  We just got married.	6  My parents used to work in a circus.

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

- I met somebody whose mother writes detective stories.
- I met a man _____.
- I met a woman _____.
- I met somebody _____.
- I met a couple _____.
- I met somebody _____.

91.2 Complete the sentences. Use the sentences in the box to make relative clauses with *where*.

I can buy some postcards there	I was born there
Ann bought a dress there	we can have a really good meal there
John is staying there	we had the car repaired there

- I recently went back to the town where I was born.
- Do you know a restaurant _____?
- Is there someplace near here _____?
- I can't remember the name of the garage _____.
- Do you know the name of the hotel _____?
- Ann bought a dress that didn't fit her, so she took it back to the store _____.

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

- What's the name of the man whose car you borrowed?
- A cemetery is a place _____ people are buried.
- A pacifist is a person _____ believes that all wars are wrong.
- An orphan is a child _____ parents are dead.
- The place _____ we spent our vacation was really beautiful.
- This school is only for children _____ first language is not English.
- I don't know the name of the woman to _____ I spoke on the phone.

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

- I'll always remember the day I first met you.
- I'll never forget the time _____.
- The reason _____ was that I didn't know your address.
- Unfortunately, I wasn't at home the evening _____.
- The reason _____ is that they don't need one.