

Defining and non-defining relative clauses

Non-defining relative clauses

Use

We use non-defining relative clauses to give extra information about the person or thing in the main clause. The extra information is not essential.

Robbie Williams' Millennium, which is one of his most successful singles, was released in 1999.

Form

In non-defining relative clauses we put a comma before and after the main clause.

We use the relative pronouns *who*, *which*, *whose*, *where* and *when* in non-defining relative clauses. The relative pronoun cannot be omitted.

Mark Smith, who lives next door to us, plays in a band.

1 Combine the sentences. Use *who*, *which*, *whose*, *where* or *when*.

Ivan is very good-looking. (He's Helen's brother.)
Ivan, who is Helen's brother, is very good-looking.

1 The book is about a murder on the Nile. (It was written by Agatha Christie.)

2 The diamond necklace has been found by the police. (It was stolen last week.)

3 Steven Spielberg lives in Hollywood. (He is a famous film director.)

4 My friend Isabel wants to do media studies. (Her father is a TV presenter.)

5 The new club plays great music. (Jamie works there.)

6 My holiday in Ibiza was wonderful. (I first met Jenny then.)

7 The new band is very good. (It was formed last year.)

Defining relative clauses

Use

We use defining relative clauses to give essential information about the person or thing in the main clause. It tells us which person or thing we are talking about.

This is the CD which everyone is talking about.

Form

There are no commas in defining relative clauses. We can replace *who* or *which* with *that* in defining relative clauses.

She's the woman that works with my mother.

This is the book that I told you about.

Who, *which*, *that* and *when* can be omitted when they are the object of the verb in the second clause, e.g.

There's the man ~~that~~ the police have been looking for.

Whose and *where* can't be omitted.

2 Combine the sentences. Use *who*, *which*, *that*, *where* or *when*.

That's the school. I used to go to it.

That's the school that I used to go to.

1 There's the girl. I was telling you about her.

2 That was the day. They got married then.

3 She's the girl. Her brother plays in the football team.

4 That's the café. I meet my friends there.

5 This is the film. I've been waiting to see it for ages.

6 Have you met the girl? She's going out with Ted.

7 These are the trainers. I bought them yesterday.
