

Relative Clauses: Defining and Non-defining

Printable practice worksheet with mixed exercises and answer key

Name: _____	Date: _____
Level: B1–B2	Topic: Relative clauses

Quick reminder

Use defining relative clauses for essential information and non-defining relative clauses for extra information. Remember: non-defining clauses use commas, and we do not use **that** in non-defining clauses.

Exercise 1: Choose the correct relative pronoun

Complete each sentence with *who, which, that, whose, where, or when*. More than one answer may be possible in some sentences.

- The woman ____ lives next door is a doctor.
- This is the café ____ we first met.
- The laptop ____ I bought last month is already much faster than my old one.
- Summer is the season ____ many people go on holiday.
- That is the student ____ essay won first prize.
- The film ____ we watched last night was surprisingly moving.
- I know a man ____ can repair almost anything.
- Do you remember the day ____ we got our exam results?

Exercise 2: Decide if the clause is defining or non-defining

Write *D* for defining or *ND* for non-defining.

- My brother, who works in Bristol, is coming to visit this weekend. ____
- The people who live upstairs are very friendly. ____
- Paris, which is one of Europe's most famous cities, attracts millions of visitors. ____
- The book that you lent me was excellent. ____
- My aunt, whose garden is always full of roses, loves spring. ____
- Students who revise regularly usually feel more confident in exams. ____
- Our car, which we bought only six months ago, has broken down again. ____
- The restaurant where we had dinner last Friday was extremely noisy. ____

Exercise 3: Add commas where necessary

Rewrite the sentences. Add commas only if the relative clause is non-defining.

- My English teacher who has been teaching for twenty years still loves her job.
- The students who sit near the window can hear the traffic outside.
- Mr Carter who taught me at secondary school retired last year.
- The house that stands on the corner has just been sold.
- My cousin Ellie who lives in Edinburgh is coming to stay with us.
- The shoes which I bought online are too tight.

Exercise 4: Join the sentences using a relative clause

Combine each pair into one sentence. Use a defining or non-defining relative clause.

1. I spoke to a woman. She had worked with my father.
2. The 10.15 train was cancelled. It usually arrives on time.
3. Maya is wearing a necklace. Her grandmother gave it to her.
4. We visited a village. Charles Dickens once stayed there.
5. My phone stopped working yesterday. I bought it only three weeks ago.
6. The boy didn't apologise. He had broken the window.
7. I returned the dress. I had bought it for the wedding.
8. Our neighbour is moving to York. He is a brilliant violinist.

Exercise 5: Omit the relative pronoun if possible

Rewrite the sentence without the relative pronoun if this is possible. If it is not possible, write not possible.

1. The jacket that I was looking for was under the bed.
2. The woman who called earlier didn't leave a message.
3. The song which we heard on the radio is stuck in my head.
4. The boy that won the race was only twelve.
5. The project which my team completed took six weeks.
6. The man who lives opposite us is an architect.

Exercise 6: Correct the mistakes

Each sentence contains one mistake. Rewrite it correctly.

1. My sister that lives in Dublin is a lawyer.
2. The book, that I bought yesterday, is already fascinating.
3. Mrs Brown who teaches us maths is absent today.
4. The place which we got engaged was by the sea.
5. My car, I bought last year, has started making strange noises.
6. The students whose sit in the front row always ask interesting questions.

Answer Key

Exercise 1

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Our neighbour, who is a brilliant violinist, is

No.	Answer
1	who / that
2	where
3	which / that
4	when
5	whose
6	which / that
7	who / that
8	when

Exercise 5

No.	Answer	No.	Answer
		1	The jacket I was looking for was under the bed.
		2	Not possible.
		3	The song we heard on the radio is stuck in my head.
		4	Not possible.
		5	The project my team completed took six weeks.
		6	Not possible.

Exercise 2

No.	Answer
1	ND
2	D
3	ND
4	D
5	ND
6	D
7	ND
8	D

Exercise 6

No.	Answer	No.	Answer
		1	My sister, who lives in Dublin, is a lawyer.
		2	The book that I bought yesterday is already fascinating.
		3	Mrs Brown, who teaches us maths, is absent today.
		4	The place where we got engaged was by the sea.

Exercise 3

No.	Answer	No.	Answer
1	My English teacher, who has been teaching for twenty years, still loves her job.		My car, which I bought last year, has started making strange noises.
2	The students who sit near the window can hear the traffic outside.		The students who sit in the front row always ask interesting questions.
3	Mr Carter, who taught me at secondary school, retired last year.		
4	The house that stands on the corner has just been sold.		
5	My cousin Ellie, who lives in Edinburgh, is coming to stay with us.		
6	The shoes which I bought online are too tight.		

Exercise 4

No.	Answer
1	I spoke to a woman who had worked with my father.
2	The 10.15 train, which usually arrives on time, was cancelled.
3	Maya is wearing a necklace which / that her grandmother gave her.
4	We visited a village where Charles Dickens once stayed.
5	My phone, which I bought only three weeks ago, stopped working yesterday.
6	The boy who had broken the window didn't apologise.
7	I returned the dress which / that I had bought for the wedding.