

GRAMMAR SUPPLEMENT: BASICS OF RELATIVE CLAUSES

Reasons for their use:

To provide more information: They add extra details about a person or thing.
<i>Torres del Paine, <u>which is located in Patagonia</u>, is a beautiful place.</i> <i>Ricardo Montalbán, <u>who was on a popular TV series</u>, was a Mexican actor.</i>
To specify or define a noun: They provide necessary information to identify which person or thing you are talking about.
<i>The ice cream flavor <u>that I like best</u> is vanilla.</i> <i>The woman <u>who answered the phone</u> is my coworker.</i>
To avoid repetition: They are useful for combining sentences without repeating the same noun.
<i>Spanish, <u>which is spoken in many countries</u>, is a Romance language.</i> <i>Jogging, <u>which is a pretty simple activity</u>, is a great form of exercise.</i> <i>Tim, <u>who is a great cook</u>, knows a lot about this subject.</i>
To create more complex sentences: They help to enrich the meaning of a sentence by connecting clauses and adding detail.
<i>The month, <u>when I was born</u>, was a very turbulent time.</i> <i>The lab, <u>where they discovered a new element</u>, is located on this campus.</i> <i>Your opinions, <u>which I may not agree with</u>, will be respected.</i>

Forming relative clauses:

We form relative clauses by inserting a sentence into another sentence using a connector (relative pronoun or adverb) to make one new sentence.
<i>The house was built in 1976. You want to buy it. = The house <u>that you want to buy</u> was built in 1976.</i> <i>That animal is a gazelle. It is eating grass. = The animal <u>that is eating grass</u> is a gazelle.</i> <i>The scientist discovered radium. The scientist was a woman. = The scientist <u>who discovered radium</u> was a woman.</i>
We use the connectors: <i>that</i> or <i>which</i> for things and animals
<i>Tea is a popular drink in England. Tea is grown in China. = Tea, <u>which is grown in China</u>, is a popular drink in England.</i> <i>The thing was a plane. You saw it in the sky. = The thing <u>that you saw in the sky</u> was a plane.</i>
We use the connector: <i>who</i> for people
<i>The people spoke a different language. They used to live here. = The people <u>who used to live here</u> spoke a different language.</i> <i>The man was at the restaurant. He is a great author. = The man <u>who was at the restaurant</u> is a great author.</i>
We use the connectors: <i>when</i> for times, and <i>where</i> for locations

***I remember the day. We first met then. = I remember the day when we first met.
This is the café. I like to get coffee there. = This is the café where I like to get coffee.***

Practice Exercise 1

Complete the space with a connector: that, who, when, where (they can be used more than once)

1. The items ____ you ordered from Amazon have arrived.
2. The café ____ is on the corner has closed.
3. The professor ____ teaches that class is very popular.
4. I met some people ____ live on boats.
5. The school ____ I met my best friend changed its name two years ago.
6. Guanacos ____ live in South America evolved from animals ____ arrived from North America.
7. The time of day ____ I feel best is around noon.
8. They discovered a planet ____ is bigger than its star.
9. The person ____ made these muffins must be a great cook.
10. Someone ____ can read ancient Babylonian texts was hired by the museum.

Practice Exercise 2

Circle the correct relative pronoun connector.

Emily Humphrey is a young entrepreneur **1 who / which** has just turned 24, and **2 that / who** wants to make her company, SOS, the best in the world for teaching people how to make their own websites. The courses **3 who / that** she offers vary from web design to computer coding. The idea for the company came to her when she was looking for a course **4 where / which** she could learn about web design. It was a plan **5 that / when** grew slowly, and at first she lacked the confidence to start the company, but she found an office **6 where / that** she could start the business, and the business grew quickly. She thinks that more young people should set up their own businesses and that it's often a lack of confidence **7 that / who** holds them back. She believes that people **8 who / which** succeed are risk-takers.

Practice Exercise 3

Place the relative clauses (in the box) into the spaces in the sentences. Use each relative clause once.

that you got at the supermarket	that were planted last year	when you talk to them
that you left unguarded	that was exported to Chile	
who's just celebrated her 60 th birthday	that will have over 500 shops	
that you wrote	who you see on the street	where we have classes

1. The letter _____ hasn't arrived yet.
2. The trees in the new park _____ are still very small.
3. All the bags _____ were stolen by someone.
4. A lot of people walking around are not very friendly _____.
5. Most of the people _____ are in a hurry.
6. Some of the food _____ is not very tasty.
7. My mother, _____, is a very active and dynamic woman.
8. The room _____ has problems with internet connections.
9. A new shopping center _____ is being built over there.
10. Bewitched was a popular American TV series _____.

Practice Exercise 4

Rewrite the two simple sentences as one sentence with a relative clause.

Example: Lao is a language. It is related to Thai. = Lao is a language that is related to Thai.

1. My cellphone has my bank information. It was hacked. =
_____.
2. Large animals are impractical pets. They need a lot of space. =
_____.
3. The strange sound was made by a bird. You heard it. =
_____.
4. The tone was very offensive. He used it with me. =
_____.
5. Dr. Walters has a degree in English Literature. She teaches that course. =
_____.
6. La Habra is a town in California. I was born there. =
_____.
7. Lessons 1-3 will be on the test. We focused on them in class. =
_____.
8. People are usually healthier. They have a balanced diet. =
_____.

Practice Exercise 5

Each sentence has three (a-c) alternative relative clauses. Mark the two that are good/acceptable. One is not acceptable.

1. I'd like to thank all of my supporters _____.
 - a) who have helped me
 - b) who don't know me
 - c) who have donated to me
2. My uncle _____ grows huge melons and squash there.
 - a) who lives on a farm
 - b) who has a farm near San Clemente
 - c) who studied agronomy
3. I think that the sandwich _____ for lunch is upsetting my stomach.
 - a) that was disgusting
 - b) that I had
 - c) that I ordered
4. The mine _____ is located in the mountains of Colombia.
 - a) where this emerald was found
 - b) that is an emerald
 - c) that produces huge emeralds
5. It's best to take courses _____ during the first two years of the program.
 - a) that are prerequisites
 - b) when you can focus
 - c) that are fundamental

ANSWER KEY

Practice Exercise 1

Complete the space with a connector: that, who, when, where (they can be used more than once)

1. The items **that** you ordered from Amazon have arrived.
2. The café **that** is on the corner has closed.
3. The professor **who** teaches that class is very popular.
4. I met some people **who** live on boats.
5. The school **where** I met my best friend changed its name two years ago.

6. Guanacos **that** live in South America evolved from animals **that** arrived from North America.
7. The time of day **when** I feel best is around noon.
8. They discovered a planet **that** is bigger than its star.
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10. Someone **who** can read ancient Babylonian texts was hired by the museum.

Practice Exercise 2

Circle the correct relative pronoun connector.

Emily Humphrey is a young entrepreneur **1 who** has just turned 24, and **2 who** wants to make her company, SOS, the best in the world for teaching people how to make their own websites. The courses **3 that** she offers vary from web design to computer coding. The idea for the company came to her when she was looking for a course **4 where** she could learn about web design. It was a plan **5 that** grew slowly, and at first she lacked the confidence to start the company, but she found an office **6 where** she could start the business, and the business grew quickly. She thinks that more young people should set up their own businesses and that it's often a lack of confidence **7 that** holds them back. She believes that people **8 who** succeed are risk-takers.

Practice Exercise 3

Place the relative clauses (in the box) into the spaces in the sentences. Use each relative clause once.

that you got at the supermarket	that were planted last year	when you talk to them
that you left unguarded	that was exported to Chile	
who's just celebrated her 60 th birthday	that will have over 500 shops	
that you wrote	who you see on the street	where we have classes

1. The letter **that you wrote** hasn't arrived yet.
2. The trees in the new park **that were planted last year** are still very small.
3. All the bags **that you left unguarded** were stolen by someone.
4. A lot of people walking around are not very friendly **when you talk to them**.
5. Most of the people **who you see on the street** are in a hurry.
6. Some of the food **that you got at the supermarket** is not very tasty.
7. My mother, **who's just celebrated her 60th birthday**, is a very active and dynamic woman.
8. The room **where we have classes** has problems with internet connections.

9. A new shopping center **that will have over 500 shops** is being built over there.
10. Bewitched was a popular American TV series **that was exported to Chile**.

Practice Exercise 4

Rewrite the two simple sentences as one sentence with a relative clause.

Example: Lao is a language. It is related to Thai. = Lao is a language that is related to Thai.

1. My cellphone has my bank information. It was hacked. = My cellphone that has my bank information was hacked.
2. Large animals are impractical pets. They need a lot of space. = Large animals that need a lot of space are impractical pets.
3. The strange sound was made by a bird. You heard it. = The strange sound that you heard was made by a bird.
4. The tone was very offensive. He used it with me. = The tone that he used with me was very offensive.
5. Dr. Walters has a degree in English Literature. She teaches that course. = Dr. Walters who has a degree in English Literature teaches that course.
6. La Habra is a town in California. I was born there. = La Habra where I was born is a town in California.
7. Lessons 1-3 will be on the test. We focused on them in class. = Lesson 1-3 that we focused on in class will be on the test.
8. People are usually healthier. They have a balanced diet. = People who have a balanced diet are usually healthier.

Practice Exercise 5

Each sentence has three (a-c) alternative relative clauses. Mark the two that are good/acceptable. One is not acceptable.

1. I'd like to thank all of my supporters _____.
 - a) **who have helped me**
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- a) that was disgusting
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4. The mine _____ is located in the mountains of Colombia.
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