

Defining and non-defining relative clauses

Use relative clauses to provide extra information. This information can either define something (defining clause), or provide unnecessary, but interesting, added information (non-defining clause).

Defining relative clauses:

The woman who lives in apartment No. 34 has been arrested.

1. provide information which is necessary for the reader to understand the sentence
2. NO commas
3. we can use THAT here

Non-defining relative clauses:

Mr Brown, who is a doctor, is a very nice person.

1. provide extra information; if you leave it the sentence still makes sense
2. commas
3. we never use THAT here

Relative Pronouns in Non-Defining Relative Clauses

	Person	Object
Subject	who	which
Object	who, whom	which
Possessive	whose	whose, of which

Examples:

- Frank Zappa, who was one of the most creative artists in rock 'n roll, came from California.
- Olympia, whose name is taken from the Greek, is the capitol of Washington State.
- Frank invited Janet, who (whom) he had met in Japan, to the party.
- Peter brought his favorite antique book, which he had found at a flea market, to show his friends.
- The singer, whose most recent recording has had much success, is signing autographs.
- The artist, whose name he could not remember, was one of the best he had ever seen.

! After numbers and words like **many, most, neither, and some**, we use **of** before **whom** and **which** in non-defining relative clauses.

Example: Many of those people, most of whom enjoyed their experience, spent at least a year abroad. Dozens of people had been invited, most of whom I knew.