

NOUN CLAUSES 1

A noun clause is a dependent clause and cannot stand alone as a sentence. It must be connected to an independent clause, a main clause. A noun clause has its own subject and verb. It can begin with a question word. It can begin with *if* or *whether*. And it can begin with *that*.

a) Noun clauses with question words:

The following question words can be used to introduce a noun clause: *when, where, why, how, who, whom, what, which, whose*.

Example:

Answer this question using 'I don't know...'

Where does Maria live?

I don't know _____.

It is incorrect to say, "I don't know where does she live."

Notice that "does she live" is a question form. Noun clauses cannot be in question form; it has to be a statement.

"I don't know where she lives" is the correct answer.

You try it:

Respond to these questions using I don't know...

1- How old is Kate?

2- Where did Juan go?

3- Why did Maria leave?

4- What did she say?

5- When is she going to leave?

6- What country is Maria from?

7- What is that girl's name?

Now compare your sentences to mine.

1- I don't know how old she is.

2- I don't know where he went.

3- I don't know why she left.

4- I don't know what she said.

5- I don't know when she is going to leave.

6- I don't know what country she is from.

7- I don't know what her name is.

Noun clauses with *who, what, whose + be*:

A noun or pronoun that follows main verb 'be' in a question comes in front of 'be' in a noun clause.

Example:

--> Who is that boy? I don't know who that boy is.

--> Whose pen is this? I don't know whose pen this is.

A prepositional phrase does not come in front of 'be' in a noun clause.

Example:

--> Who is in the office? I don't know who is in the office.

--> Whose pen is on the desk? I don't know whose pen is on the desk.

Notice that usual word order is not used when the question word is the subject of the question as in 'who' and 'what'. In this case, the word order in the noun clause is the same as the word order in question. Be sure to complete the exercises in the assignments.

b) Noun clauses, which begin with *if* or *whether*:

When a yes/no question is changed to a noun clause, *if* is usually used to introduce the clause.

Example:

--> Is Maria at home?

I don't know if Maria is at home.

--> Does this bus go to Los Angeles?

I don't know if this bus goes to Los Angeles.

--> Did Juan go to Mexico?

I wonder if Juan went to Mexico.

Frequently, speakers may add 'or not'. This comes at the end of the noun clause in sentences with 'if' and immediately after 'whether' in sentences with 'whether'.