

Non-Defining Relative Clauses

Relative pronouns are used to introduce relative clauses:

who	people /a person
which	things/objects / situations
that	anything - only in defining relative clauses
for which	introduces a solution to a problem in the main clause
in which	‘which’ means the noun in the previous sentence. You have to understand the preposition to understand how it works.
on which	
of which	
into which	
about which	

The phrases in white are less commonly used but still useful:

- She had a rash, **for which** I gave her some ointment.
- I have a car, **in which** there is a great stereo.
- Go back into the restaurant. There is a table, **on which** are my keys.
- He mentioned a new type of chemotherapy treatment, **about which** I was telling you.

Non-Defining Relative Clauses

Green is the main clause and which introduces the relative clause:

- **My friend has had lupus for 5 years,** **which** makes his life difficult at times. (situation)
- **My allergies,** **which** are related mainly to animal hairs, **cause me problems.** (my allergies)

Rules for non-defining clauses

- The information is not essential in a non-defining clause – we can remove it
- We do use commas
- We cannot replace who & which with ‘that’
- We cannot omit the pronoun
- The non-defining relative clause can go at the end or in the middle of the main clause – depending on the situation
- The non-defining clause can talk about the noun or the situation in the main clause
- The non-defining clause can be extended with ‘and’

Exercise 1

Look at the below sentences and choose which are correct. Defining or non-defining? Please fix any errors:

1. My summer house, which is in France, is very big. (1 summer house)
2. Sarah Smith has been treated with antibiotics, which she needs to take twice a day.
3. Did you see the news report about the boy that had the hiccups for 3 years?
4. I am writing about Jane Ferguson, who recently underwent a hemiarthroplasty and needs assistance at home.
5. Sarah Boddington who was in my year at school is a doctor now.
6. My house has thin walls, which is really annoying!

Exercise 2

Make sentences with relative clauses, using the prompts below:

1. ulcer / prescribed / Mrs Danns/ infected/ antibiotics
2. Mr Johnson / reception / give / crutches / pick up
3. successful / Mr Smith / 7th April / undergo / cholecystectomy
4. require / refer / monitoring / Joanne Gardener / follow up care / recover - pneumonia

Exercise 3

Choose a combination of words and make a sentence with a relative clause (Be creative – some examples are below):

bananas sandwich delicious unhealthy tiring cat fur garden tree people sister house run rabbit friend meeting shift long short quick heavy nice wonderful awful government France the UK the USA the NHS work go have like need want stressful holiday shark love hat shoes car country medication bed comfortable understand phone task cup coffee strong weak good bad comfortable helpful boring exciting fashionable big small

Exercise 4

Spot the errors and fix them:

- 1) Paracetamol which helps with pain is suitable for Mrs Smith
- 2) Mr Johnson should use sterile gauze for his dressings which is available at reception.
- 3) Which is a hospital acquired infection, your mother has MRSA.
- 4) I'd like to introduce Dr Smith who is a surgeon in the Orthopaedic department.
- 5) Dr Edwards who does a lot of open heart operations at this hospital is going to come along shortly for a chat.
- 6) We understand that you have some questions, that the nurse can help you with.

Answers

Exercise 1

They are all ok except Number 5!

1. My summer house, **which** is in France, **is very big**. (1 summer house)
2. Sarah Smith has been treated with antibiotics, **which** she needs to take twice a day.
3. Did you see the news report about the boy **who/that** had the hiccups for 3 years?
4. I am writing about Jane Ferguson, **who** recently underwent a hemiarthroplasty and needs assistance at home.
5. Sarah Boddington, **who** was in my year at school, **is a doctor now**.
6. My house has thin walls, **which** is really annoying!

Exercise 2

1. ulcer / prescribed / Mrs Danns/ infected/ antibiotics
 - Mrs Danns, who has an infected ulcer, was prescribed antibiotics.
 - Mrs Danns has been prescribed some antibiotics for her ulcer, which is infected
 - Mrs Danns has an ulcer, which is infected and needs antibiotics.
2. Mr Johnson / reception / give / crutches / pick up
 - Mr Johnson can pick up the crutches which he was given at reception.
 - Mr Johnson can pick up the crutches that he was given at reception.
 - Mr Johnson can pick up the crutches he was given at reception.
3. Mr Smith underwent a cholecystectomy on the 7th April, which was successful.
4. I am writing to refer Joanne Gardener, who is recovering from pneumonia and requires follow up care and monitoring.

Exercise 3

- I had a **holiday in France**, **which** was ruined by a shark!
- Yesterday morning, I ate **breakfast**, **which** was made in the French style.
- I have a **sister who likes banana sandwiches**. I have another who does not.
- I have a sister, **who** likes banana sandwiches.
- **The NHS**, **which** is in the UK, **is run by the government**.
- ~~The NHS is run by **the government**, **which** is in the UK.~~

Exercise 4

- 1) Paracetamol, which helps with pain, **is suitable for Mrs Smith**.
- 2) Mr Johnson should use sterile gauze, which is available at reception, **for his dressings**.
- 3) Your mother has MRSA, **which** is a hospital acquired infection.
- 4) I'd like to introduce **Dr Smith**, **who** is a surgeon in the Orthopaedic department.
- 5) **Dr Edwards**, **who** does a lot of open heart operations at this hospital, **is going to come along shortly for a chat**.
- 6) **We understand that you have some questions**, **which** the nurse can help you with.