80 *what, which, whose*

1 *what, which, whose*

Wh- WORD	USE	EXAMPLE
what	asks about things or ideas	*What does it do?*
which	asks for a choice between a few things	*Which programme do you want to watch?*
whose	asks about possession/relationships	*Whose bag is this? Whose sister is she?*

2 *which* or *what*?

Which and *what* both ask about things and ideas.

- We use *which* when we are thinking of a small number of things:
  ***Which colour** do you want for the bedroom, blue, green or grey?*
  ***Which languages** do you speak?*
  We can also use *which* (but not *what*) to ask about people:
  ***Which member** of the band do you like most?*
  We do not need a noun if it is clear what we are asking about:
  *'I speak four languages.' 'Really? **Which** do you speak?'*
- *What* asks about more things than *which*. We often use *what* without a noun:
  ***What**'s your favourite colour? **What**'s on at the cinema this week? **What** does this thing do?*
  We can also use a noun after *what*: ***What instrument** do you play?*

3 Common uses of *what*

to ask about a person's work	*What + do + noun + do?*	*What does your husband do? He's a builder.*
to ask for a description	*What + be + noun + like?*	*What's the weather like? It's cold and rainy.* *What's Jonathan like? He's very clever and he's quite shy.*
to ask about likes and dislikes	*What + do + noun + like?*	*What kind of films does Jonathan like?* *He likes South American films.*

⚠ We don't use *like* in the answer to *What is he like?*:
✗ ~~*He's like very clever.*~~ ✓ *He's very clever.*

4 *who* or *whose*?

We use *who* to ask about people: ***Who** did you see at the party last night?*

We use *whose* (with or without a noun) to ask about possessions and relationships:
***Whose** is that bag on the table?* (= Who does the bag belong to?)
***Whose sister** is she?* (= Who is her sister?)

⚠ *Who's* and *whose* sound the same, but they are different. *Who's* means *who is* or *who has*:
***Who's** washing up today?* (who is) ***Who's** seen the latest copy of 'Hello' magazine?* (who has)