

2 Leaving out the relative pronoun

The pronoun (e.g. *who*, *which*, *that*) in a relative clause can be the subject or object of the clause:

SUBJECT	Arthur Conan Doyle was the writer who invented Sherlock Holmes. (Conan Doyle invented Sherlock Holmes.)
OBJECT	'The Hound of the Baskervilles' is a novel which he wrote in 1901. (He wrote the novel.)

We can leave out the relative pronoun when it is an OBJECT, especially in speech and informal writing:

'The Hound of the Baskervilles' is a novel he wrote in 1901.

FORMALITY CHECK We usually include the object relative pronoun in formal writing:
To activate your card you must use the new PIN number **which** we sent by recorded delivery.

! We cannot leave out the relative pronoun when it is a SUBJECT:

✗ ~~Arthur Conan Doyle was the writer invented Sherlock Holmes.~~

✓ Arthur Conan Doyle was the writer **who** invented Sherlock Holmes.

3 Clauses with *when*, *where*, *why*

We can also use *when*, *where* and *why* to introduce relative clauses.

- *When* introduces a relative clause about times, days, years, etc:
*There was a storm on the day **when** my sister got married.*
- *Where* introduces a relative clause about places:
*Do you know any shops **where** you can get designer jeans?*
We can also use *which/that* (+ *in*) to talk about places:
*That's the hotel **where** we stayed. That's the hotel **which/that** we stayed **in**.*
- *Why* introduces a relative clause about reason:
*That's the reason **why** I'm late.*

We can leave out the noun before *when*, *where* and *why*:

*That was **when** I lived in London.* (the time when)

*This is **where** my best friend went to school.* (the building/place where)

*And that's **why** we're late.* (the reason why)

We can leave out *when* after *day*, *year*, *time*, etc. and *why* after *reason*:

*There was a storm on **the day** my sister got married. That's **the reason** I'm late.*

4 Prepositions in relative clauses

We sometimes form relative clauses using verbs with prepositions, such as *apply for*.

FORMALITY CHECK The position of the preposition is different in formal and informal English:

	INFORMAL	FORMAL
I applied for that job. →	<i>That's the job which I applied for.</i>	<i>Below are the details of the job for which you applied.</i>
I work with Steve. →	<i>Steve's the man who I work with.</i>	<i>It's important to get on with the people with whom* you work.</i>

* If we put a preposition before *who*, it changes to *whom*.

! We don't use prepositions in clauses beginning with *when* or *where*:

I used to live in this house. ✗ ~~*This is the house where I used to live in.*~~
✓ *This is the house where I used to live.*

! We cannot put a preposition in front of *that*:

I've been looking for this book. ✗ ~~*This is the book for that I've been looking.*~~
✓ *This is the book **that** I've been looking **for**.*