

Relative Pronouns

Relative clauses give extra information related to a previously mentioned noun or pronoun within a sentence. A relative clause always starts with a relative pronoun, such as:

that

whose

which

whom

who



Joe, who was dressed as a cowboy, was excited about his friend's fancy dress party.

'who' is the **relative pronoun** here used to begin the relative clause. As this is extra, non-essential (non-restrictive) information, we put the clause in commas. This is often called an embedded or sandwich clause.

The winning competitor held the trophy aloft, which made the crowd cheer loudly.

'which' is the **relative pronoun** so this time the relative clause is after the main clause. We still need a comma before the relative clause as this is also extra, non-essential (non-restrictive) information.



People that exercise daily are more likely to maintain a healthy weight.

'that' is a **relative pronoun** so this also shows a relative clause. This time the information in the extra clause is essential (restrictive) to the meaning of the sentence so therefore we don't need to use commas.