

Unit 7

Defining relative clauses

We use defining relative clauses to explain exactly who or what we are talking about.

Relative clauses are formed with a relative pronoun and a clause:

- *who* (for people)

Here's the man who can help you.

- *which* (for things)

The money which isn't used goes back into the account.

- *that* (for people or things)

I know a woman that works in a bank. It's a job that takes up a lot of time.

- *where* (places)

This is a shop where bartering is allowed.

- *whose* (belonging to a person or thing)

I don't know whose things these are.

- *when* (times)

Sunday is the day when my family get together.

In clauses where the pronoun is the object, the pronoun can be left out.

They charge a fee for each swap (that) they organise.

It's a cheap way to get something (that) you want.

Non-defining relative clauses

Use non-defining relative clauses to add extra information about a person or thing. We use commas before and after the clause.

My friend, who lives in Paris, is visiting me this weekend.

They gave her a present for her birthday, which was a real surprise.

Use *which* and *who* with non-defining relative clauses. *That* is not used in this kind of clause.

My office, that is very small, is on the tenth floor.

My office, which is very small, is on the tenth floor.

Compare non-defining and defining relative clauses:

I own shares in a company which makes cars.

(The clause is necessary.)

My company, which makes cars, gives its employees shares.

(The sentence makes sense without the clause.)

Countable and uncountable nouns

Nouns can be countable, uncountable or both.

Countable nouns are the largest group of nouns. They can be singular or can have a plural form. We can use them with the articles *a/an* or *the*.

A car is an expensive thing to buy.

Cars are expensive to buy.

Uncountable nouns refer to things which cannot be divided into units. We can use them with the article *the*, but not *a/an*. They do not have a plural form and we use them with a singular verb and with *some* and *any*.

My luggage are over there. My luggage is over there.

I need to buy a furniture. I need to buy some furniture.

Some common uncountable nouns are: *accommodation, advice, baggage, cash, clothing, equipment, furniture, hair, health, homework, information, knowledge, luggage, money, rubbish, shopping, traffic, weather* and *work*.

Some uncountable nouns can be used as countable nouns, if the speaker views them as units. This is the case with many food and drink words.

I'd like a tea and two coffees please. (The speaker is thinking of a cup of tea and two cups of coffee.)

Sometimes countable nouns are used as uncountable nouns, often with food words. This happens when we refer to something as a substance rather than a single unit.

I dropped the plate and now I have egg all over my shirt.

Nouns that can be both countable and uncountable sometimes change meaning.

The teacher has long, black hair. (Uncountable, talking about hair in general)

You have a long, black hair on your jacket. (Countable, talking about a single hair)

wish

We use the verb *wish* to talk about unreal situations. To talk about the present, use the past tense after *wish*.

I wish they were back on the island.

We can also use *If only* instead of *I wish*.

If only they were back on the island.

When we use *be* with *wish* we can say *I wish I was* or *I wish I were*. *I wish I were* is more formal than *I wish I was*.

I wish I was a good singer.

I wish I were taller.



Unit 8

would

We use *would* ...

- to talk about hypothetical situations in the future

What would you do? Would you jump into the water or stay on the boat?

I would jump into the water.

- to talk about habitual actions in the past. (See page 134 for more on this use.)

When we were children we would often go swimming on Saturdays.

- to make offers

Would you like a cup of tea?

- to make polite requests

Would you turn the light on please?

- to give advice

You sound really ill. I would stay in bed today.

Language note: 'd can mean *would* or *had*.

Second conditional

if clause		Main clause
If	+ past simple	I / you, etc <i>would / might / could (not)</i> + infinitive

Use the second conditional to talk about an unreal future situation. It is unlikely or almost impossible that the situation will happen.

If I didn't have to work, I'd go to the beach today. (But I have to work so I won't go to the beach.)

Use the past tense in the *if* (conditional) clause to refer to an unreal situation in the present or future.

If I had time ... (I don't/won't have time)

Use *would* + infinitive in the main clause to talk about the consequence or result of the unreal situation.

If I had time, I would study more.

I would study more if I had time.

Language note: we sometimes say *If I were* instead of *If I was*. Both verbs are correct. *Were* is especially common in the expression *If I were you ...* when giving somebody advice.

Third conditional

if clause		Main clause
If	+ past perfect (<i>had</i> + past participle)	I / you, etc <i>would / may / might / could (not) have</i> + past participle

Use the third conditional to talk about unreal situations in the past.

If he hadn't invented this machine, our lives would have been very different.

If you had arrived earlier, you might have seen him.

Use the past perfect in the *if* (conditional) clause to talk about an unreal situation in the past.

If they had found the cure ... (They didn't find the cure)

Use *would have* + past participle in the main clause to talk about the consequence or result of the unreal situation.

If they had found the cure earlier, many lives would have been saved. (Lives were not saved)

Many lives would have been saved if they had found the cure earlier.

Past modals of deduction

Past modals can be used to express how certain or uncertain you are about what happened in the past.

Certain it was	<i>It must have been</i> + past participle
↓	<i>It may / could / might have</i> + past participle
Certain it wasn't	<i>It can't have</i> + past participle

Use *must have* when you are sure that something happened, based on evidence.

This must have been the queen's tomb. (There is proof that it is.)

Use *can't have* when you are sure that something didn't happen. *The treasure can't have come from here.* (There is proof that it is from somewhere else.)

Use *might / may / could have* when you are unsure whether something happened.

The objects could have been used for religious purposes.

Language note: the opposite of *must have* is *can't have*.

