

Unit 90

Relative clauses (3) - whose, whom and where

a Whose

We use **whose** in relative clauses instead of **his/her/their**:

we saw some people - **their** car had broken down
→ We saw some people **whose** car had broken down.

We use **whose** mostly for people:

- A widow is a woman **whose husband is dead**. (her husband is dead)
- What's the name of the girl **whose car you borrowed**? (you borrowed her car)
- The other day I met someone **whose brother I went to school with**. (I went to school with his brother)

b Whom is possible instead of **who** (for people) when it is the *object* of the verb in the relative clause (like the sentences in **Unit 89**):

- The man **whom I wanted to see** was away on holiday. (I wanted to see him)

You can also use **whom** with a preposition (**to/from/with whom** etc.):

- The girl **with whom he fell in love** left him after a few weeks. (he fell in love with her)

But we do not often use **whom**. In spoken English we normally prefer **who** or **that** (or you can leave them out - see **Unit 89**):

- The man (**who/that**) I wanted to see ...
- The girl (**who/that**) he fell in love with ...

For **whom** see also **Units 91** and **92**.

c Where

You can use **where** in a relative clause to talk about places:

the hotel - we stayed **there** - wasn't very clean
→ The hotel **where we stayed** wasn't very clean.

- I recently went back to **the town where I was born**. (or 'the town (that) I was born in')
- I would like to live in **a country where there is plenty of sunshine**.

d We use **that** (or we leave it out) when we say **the day / the year / the time** (etc.) **that something happened**:

- Do you still remember **the day (that) we first met**?
- **The last time (that) I saw her**, she looked very well.
- I haven't seen them since **the year (that) they got married**.

e You can say **the reason why something happens** or **the reason that something happens**. You can also leave out **why** and **that**:

- **The reason (why/that) I'm phoning you** is to invite you to a party.

