

Unit 89

Relative clauses (2) - clauses with or without

who/that

a Look again at these examples from Unit 88:

- The man **who lives next door** is very friendly. (or 'that lives')
- Where are the eggs **that were in the fridge**? (or 'which were')

In these sentences **who** and **that** are *subjects* of the verbs in the relative clauses: the man lives next door, the eggs were in the fridge. You cannot leave out **who** or **that** in these sentences.

Sometimes **who** and **that** are *objects* of the verbs:

the man - I wanted to see **him** - was away on holiday
→ Have you found the keys **that** you lost?

When **who** or **that** are objects of the verb in the relative clause, you can leave them out:

- The man **I wanted to see** was away on holiday. (but not 'The man I wanted to see *him* was away on holiday.')
- Have you found **the keys you lost**? (but not 'Have you found the keys you lost *them*?')
- The dress **Ann bought** doesn't fit her very well. (= the dress **that** Ann bought)
- The girl **Gerry is going to marry** is American. (= the girl **who/that** Gerry is going to marry)
- Is there **anything I can do**? (= is there anything **that** I can do?)

b There are often prepositions (**in/at/with** etc.) in relative clauses. Study the position of the prepositions in these sentences:

do you know the girl? - Tom is talking **to** her
→ Do you know the girl (**who/that**) Tom is talking **to** ?
the bed - I slept **in** it last night - wasn't very comfortable
→ The bed (**that**) I slept **in** last night wasn't very comfortable.

- The man (**who/that**) I sat next to on the plane talked all the time.
- Are these the books (**that**) you have been looking for?
- The girl (**who/that**) he fell in love with left him after a few weeks.

c You cannot use **what** instead of **that**:

- Everything (**that**) he said was true. (not 'everything what he said')
- I gave her all the money (**that**) I had. (not 'all ... what I had')

What = the thing(s) that:

- Did you hear **what I said**? (= the words that I said)
- I won't tell anyone **what happened**. (= the thing that happened)

