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## Quick and Handy Grammar Review Articles:

### *Phrases and Clauses*

A **phrase** is a *group of words*. A **clause** is a *group of words with a subject and a verb*. There are two types of clauses: an *independent* clause, which is a complete sentence, and a *dependent* clause, which requires the presence of an independent clause to make up a complete sentence. Dependent clauses serve functions: as nouns, adverbs, or adjectives.

The first type of independent clause that we will examine is the **adjective clause**. Because adjective clauses serve as adjectives, they describe nouns, and may be in three positions: after the subject, after the object of the verb, after the object of a preposition.

Johnny Depp, who is a Hollywood star, is most famous for *Pirates of the Caribbean*. [the clause describes the subject Johnny Depp]

I called Joe Montana, who used to be a football player. [the clause describes the object Joe Montana]

I had a dream of my brother walking in front of the house where I used to live. [the clause describes the word *house*, which is the object of the preposition *of*]

**Make sure that you always place the adjective clause right after the noun it describes.**

### *I. Adjective Clause Forms*

- who, that, which** as the subject of the adjective clause  
Kelly O'Rourke, who works at a vet's office, loves cats more than dogs.  
The cold pizza that cost \$1 was old and tough, but delicious.
- who, whom, that, which** (nothing) as the object of the adjective clause  
She is the woman whom the poodle bit on the finger.  
The chicken that my cousin cooked was as black as tar.  
The woman I dated had a diamond ring in her navel.  
My friend recommended *The Da Vinci Code*, which she read last year.
- when** (always followed by subject and verb)  
I will never forget the day when my team won the soccer championship.  
1999 is the year when she drank her first glass of beer.
- where** (always followed by subject and verb)  
Paris is a place where you can see an old building next to a modern office.  
Algeria is a country where the food is a mixture of French and Arabic.
- whose** (always followed by a noun) [used as a possessive]  
Felix Gomez, whose ears are permanently swollen, used to be a bad boxer.  
I never talk to people who wear mirror sunglasses.
- quantity word + whom or which** (one of whom, several of whom, two of which)  
[these forms are not very common and are very formal]  
He has read three magazines, one of which he bought at the airport.  
Enzo has three sisters, one of whom lives in Calgary.
- which** to modify the whole sentence  
His dog had four puppies, which made his tiny studio very crowded.  
Nella studied all night, which made her exhausted all day today.

## II. Punctuation of Adjective Clauses [Placement of Commas]

1. If the information is necessary for identification, do **NOT** place a comma in the sentence.  
*The man who married Gina sometimes cries when he looks at his wedding pictures.*  
*The security guard chased the two men who had robbed the store.*  
*The pigs which I saw at the zoo yesterday were sleeping in the mud.*
2. If the information is NOT necessary for identification, place a comma in the sentence.  
*Prof. Jenkins, who teaches psychology, has written two books and many articles.*  
*Mario left his laptop at Tourquaz Restaurant, where they have an internet cafe.*
3. General fruits, vegetables, animals, meats, etc. **get a comma**  
*Pasta, which is made of wheat, is an important part of the Italian diet.*  
*Ducks, which make strange noises, can swim, waddle, and fly.*  
*My mother does not eat venison, which comes from deer.*
4. Specific fruits, vegetables, animals, meats, etc. **DO NOT get a comma**  
*The peach that Maria bought in the fruit store on 6<sup>th</sup> Street was as hard as a rock.*  
*The turkey we ate for dinner was served with gravy and potatoes.*  
*The monkey that I saw at the zoo was climbing all around the cage.*  
*The cow that I saw in Kansas last year weighed more than 1000 pounds.*
5. When the adjective clause describes the general idea expressed in the independent clause, *a comma and which* are used.  
*Dina invented a popular app, which made her a rich woman.*  
*The flight was two hours late, which meant that I missed my connecting flight.*  
*The restaurant was crowded, which meant that we had to wait an hour to get a table.*

## Rules for Adjective Clauses

1. The adjective clause always goes **immediately after** the noun it modifies.
2. *Where* and *when* are **never** the subject of a clause. They are always followed by a noun or a pronoun.
3. *Whose* is always followed by a noun (because it is possessive).
4. When a comma is placed after a noun, **that** cannot be used. You must use **which**.
5. The verb in the adjective clause must **agree in number** with the noun it modifies.

**Exercise 1:**

*The following is a description of a 'typical modern family'. Try to fill in the missing words paying close attention to parts of speech, verb tense, and correct word forms.*

I think \_\_\_\_\_ (1) I have a typical modern family. I am twenty-four years old, and \_\_\_\_\_ (2) two sisters and two \_\_\_\_\_ (3). I live in a very big house \_\_\_\_\_ (4) is located in Washington, D.C. My father and mother \_\_\_\_\_ (5) divorced five years \_\_\_\_\_ (6), and I went to \_\_\_\_\_ (7) with my father. Last year, \_\_\_\_\_ (8) got married to a woman \_\_\_\_\_ (9) had three children of her own. Now we all live together in one home. Maria, \_\_\_\_\_ (10) is my \_\_\_\_\_ (11) sister, is a twelve-year old \_\_\_\_\_ (12) hair is long and curly. Tony, \_\_\_\_\_ (13) half-brother, is very different. He is a very serious boy who plays video games \_\_\_\_\_ (14) are made by Sony. My \_\_\_\_\_ (15) mother, \_\_\_\_\_ (16) is the manager of a fast food restaurant, is eighteen years younger than my father. One month ago, my father and his wife had a baby boy, who is my \_\_\_\_\_ (17) brother. Last week, when my mother came to pick me up at my school, \_\_\_\_\_ (18) I major in psychology, I told my friend David, \_\_\_\_\_ (19) has a good sense of humor, "I have to run. My mother has come to \_\_\_\_\_ (20) me up." Harry looked at the woman, \_\_\_\_\_ (21) looked more like my sister \_\_\_\_\_ (22) my mother, and said, "Your mother looks the same age as you! What an interesting \_\_\_\_\_ (23) you have!" And I think I do, \_\_\_\_\_ (24) makes life much more \_\_\_\_\_ (25).

**Exercise 2:**

*Read the following selection and underline or highlight all the adjective clauses.*

My favorite sport is played during the summer. It is a sport which requires nine players on each team.

The people who play this sport must be fast, brave, and intelligent. Players who are fast and brave will be able to react quickly to a ball which often travels 90 miles an hour or more. Players who are intelligent will be able to decide what to do before the ball comes to them and will react quickly and correctly even when they cannot watch the other players.

My favorite sport is interesting to watch. People who watch the game have a chance to discuss the strategy of the teams and the quality of the players. Spectators who understand the game well know that they have to watch two places on the field at the same time, the place where the ball is and the place where the runner is. Wise spectators know that the players often make beautiful patterns on the field as they line up to relay the ball in order to catch a runner.

My favorite sport is baseball.

**Exercise 3:**

*There are mistakes in the following sentences. Find, circle, and correct them. Rewrite the corrected sentence.*

1. He used to live in Colombia, that is a Spanish-speaking country.

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2. The woman who her name is Dina come from Tunisia.

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3. Mitt Romney, who a politician from Massachusetts might run for president.

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4. Henrietta never talk to people which don't speak her language.

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5. Jim who work in a large company which located in northern Quebec.

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6. Messi won two championships who was born in a small town in Argentina.

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7. Barbara has a house that overlooking the river.

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8. She will never forget the day when was her twenty-first birthday.

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9. Ji Na comes from a place where is very cold almost all year.

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10. Bollywood makes more films than Hollywood which is the movie capital of India.

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**Exercise 4:**

Complete the following sentences. Be careful to use the correct verb tenses and to punctuate carefully.

1. John F. Kennedy who \_\_\_\_\_ was the youngest president in history.
2. The pizzeria \_\_\_\_\_ served expensive food.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ which made me very sad.
4. Sunday is the day \_\_\_\_\_.
5. Greta went to the mall without me, which \_\_\_\_\_.
6. Marta is the type of boss \_\_\_\_\_.
7. Salmon is the meal \_\_\_\_\_.
8. Alexander Ovechkin \_\_\_\_\_ comes from Russia.
9. Bacon and eggs \_\_\_\_\_ are my favorite breakfast food.
10. Joe's sister lives in Paris \_\_\_\_\_.

**Exercise 5:**

*Complete the following sentences. Be careful to use the correct verb tenses and to punctuate carefully.*

1. I would never marry a person \_\_\_\_\_.
2. My brother bought a dog \_\_\_\_\_.
3. The doctor who \_\_\_\_\_ was from Pakistan.
4. She will never forget the day \_\_\_\_\_.
5. Rosa fell in love with the man whose \_\_\_\_\_.
6. Elephants \_\_\_\_\_ are the largest animals in the world.
7. Last month, my brother bought a car \_\_\_\_\_.
8. Nestor met a woman \_\_\_\_\_.
9. The ring \_\_\_\_\_ was made of cubic zirconium, not real diamonds.
10. Hank Crowley wore a jacket \_\_\_\_\_.



**Exercise 6:**

*Formal vs. informal concepts in adjective clauses.*

Read the following sentences and analyze differences in levels of formality. *Which is the most common? What is the effect of the first sentence in each group? Which one would you use in writing? In speaking? Is the word "whom" still common?*

\_\_\_\_\_ 1. a) The book about which I told you came out last year.

\_\_\_\_\_ 1. b) The story I told you about was written in Chinese.

\_\_\_\_\_ 1. c) The novel that I was talking about was published in Korea in 2007.

\_\_\_\_\_ 2. a) The man about whom I was talking is sitting in the corner.

\_\_\_\_\_ 2. b) The woman I was talking about is wearing the red dress.

\_\_\_\_\_ 2. c) The person that I was telling you about is my boss.

\_\_\_\_\_ 2. d) The girl who I told you about works with me.

\_\_\_\_\_ 3. a) The home in which I was brought up was on the same street as my school.

\_\_\_\_\_ 3. b) The house where I was raised had two floors.

\_\_\_\_\_ 3. c) The house I grew up in had a large kitchen.

**Exercise 7:**

*Sentence Structures. Punctuate the following sentences. Pay close attention to the rules set forth in the Grammar Introduction section.*

1. The man who stole my car was wearing a black mask.
2. Bill O'Grady comes from a small town which means that everyone knows everyone else.
3. She saw a picture of Joe's brother Paul who has a scar on his nose.
4. The photograph in the magazine showed a woman whose hair was very short.
5. Henry has two sisters whose names are Nicolette and Anna.
6. Dr. Seismore who is a retired obstetrician still loves to talk to pregnant women.
7. The meal that Connie served last night was spicy which meant that I drank water all night.
8. Hal has fond memories of his hometown which is located on a lake.
9. Bobby met his girlfriend in Asti's restaurant where the servers sing during the meal.
10. That is Betsy about whom I was telling you five minutes ago.

**Exercise 8:**

*Sentence Structures. Punctuate the following sentences. Pay close attention to the rules set forth in the Grammar Introduction section.*

1. The food that John cooked last night tasted very bad.
2. Enza is a vegetarian which means that she does not eat meat.
3. Charlie who loves fish eats just about anything.
4. George who is a Vietnam veteran supports most wars.
5. The student whose grammar book was left in the classroom is studying with Dr. Lopez.
6. Hyenas which live in Africa are very fast runners.
7. The bear that Nestor shot last week is now on display in his living room.
8. Ken has two grandmothers who both live in London.
9. The man who sold Bob the stolen watch was arrested last week.
10. I have never been to Vietnam which is located in southeast Asia.

**Exercise 9:**

*Grammar Practice. Read the following selection.*

1) Abraham Lincoln was born in a log cabin in Kentucky on February 12, 1809. 2) His family later moved to Indiana. 3) He was given little formal education. 4) Abraham Lincoln walked miles to borrow books and read them by firelight to educate himself. 5) He held several jobs in Illinois. 6) His law practice in Illinois became successful. 7) He had a famous series of debates with Stephen Douglas in 1858. 8) He lost to Douglas in the election for senator, but he gained a national reputation. 9) He was elected President in 1860. 10) In the same year the Civil War began, and he claimed broad executive powers. 11) Some people said that these powers were dictatorial. 12) He lacked a competent military commander for the Northern Army. 13) He suffered through several serious defeats. 14) One of these defeats was the first Battle of Bull Run. 15) In the Emancipation Proclamation he declared that the slaves were free. 16) Military successes helped him gain re-election in 1864. 17) Unlike many members of Congress, he wanted to be lenient and forgiving with the Southern states. 18) John Wilkes Booth shot Lincoln on April 14, 1865. 19) Lincoln died the next morning.

*Compose the following sentences.*

1. Choose sentences 1 and 3 into one sentence by using the relative pronoun **who**.  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Change sentence 2 to an adjective clause that begins with the relative pronoun **whose** and combine it with sentence 1.  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Change sentence 18 to an adjective clause that begins with the relative pronoun **whom** and combine it with sentence 19.  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Change sentence 11 to an adjective clause that begins with the relative pronoun **that** and combine it with sentence 10.  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. Change sentence 10 to an adjective clause that begins with the relative pronoun **when** and combine it with sentence 9.  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. Change sentence 6 to an adjective clause that begins with the relative pronoun **where** and combine it with sentence 5.  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. Change sentence 14 to an adjective clause that begins with an expression of quantity and combine it with sentence 13. [one of which]  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Exercise 10:**

Choose the correct letter to fill in the appropriate form.

1. I will never forget the time \_\_\_\_\_ I lost the keys to my house.  
a. where                      b. when                      c. during which                      d. who
2. Harry got fired from his job, \_\_\_\_\_ meant that he could collect unemployment insurance for 26 weeks  
a. that                      b. which                      c. who                      . whose
3. The doctor treated the wounded man at the hotel \_\_\_\_\_ he had been shot.  
a. who                      b. where                      c. which                      d. on which
4. The house \_\_\_\_\_ Mary grew up is now owned by a minister and his wife.  
a. where                      b. that                      c. which                      d. when
5. I have three brothers living in Texas, one of \_\_\_\_\_ is a meditation teacher in Houston.  
a. whom                      b. who                      c. which                      d. them
6. Giovanni has a cousin \_\_\_\_\_ nose is incredibly long.  
a. who                      b. who's                      c. whose                      d. who their
7. The people \_\_\_\_\_ the singer danced along to the music.  
a. watching                      b. who watching                      c. who watch                      d. who watches
8. Vincent Van Gogh was the type of painter \_\_\_\_\_ use of colors was extraordinary.  
a. who his                      b. that                      c. who                      d. whose
9. I discussed the ethical question with Prof. Mayer \_\_\_\_\_ teaches philosophy and religion  
a. , who                      b. who                      c. that                      d. who he
10. Hyenas \_\_\_\_\_ are rather small animals, are able to get food through cunning.  
a. that                      b. , which                      c. which                      d. who
11. France \_\_\_\_\_ people eat a great deal of cheese and drink much red wine, has a low incidence of heart attacks.  
a. where                      b. , where                      c. which                      d. that
12. I would never sit next to a person \_\_\_\_\_ like raw garlic.  
a. who he smelled                      b. whose smell                      c. who smelled                      d. that smell
13. Jose played soccer for a team \_\_\_\_\_ lost every game it played.  
a. who                      b. that                      c. which is                      d. that it
14. The movie \_\_\_\_\_ last Saturday was incredibly dull  
a. I went to it                      b. I went to                      c. that I went                      d. which I went
15. The performer \_\_\_\_\_ at the concert yesterday danced better than Janet Jackson.  
a. I saw her                      b. that I saw her                      c. whom I saw                      d. I see

## Answer Key

### Exercise 1: Close Exercise

- |          |           |             |           |                 |
|----------|-----------|-------------|-----------|-----------------|
| 1. that  | 2. have   | 3. brothers | 4. that   | 5. got          |
| 6. ago   | 7. live   | 8. he       | 9. who    | 10. who         |
| 11. step | 12. whose | 13. my      | 14. which | 15. step        |
| 16. who  | 17. half  | 18. where   | 19. who   | 20. pick        |
| 21. who  | 22. than  | 23. family  | 24. which | 25. interesting |

### Exercise 2: Identify the Adjective Clauses

My favorite sport is played during the summer. It is a sport **which requires nine players** on each team. The people **who play this sport** must be fast, brave, and intelligent. Players **who are fast and brave** will be able to react quickly to a ball **which often travels 90 miles an hour or more**. Players **who are intelligent** will be able to decide what to do before the ball comes to them and will react quickly and correctly even when they cannot watch the other players.

My favorite sport is interesting to watch. People **who watch the game** have a chance to discuss the strategy of the teams and the quality of the players. Spectators **who understand the game well** know that they have to watch two places on the field at the same time, the place **where the ball is** and the place **where the runner is**. Wise spectators know that the players often make beautiful patterns on the field as they line up to relay the ball in order to catch a runner.

My favorite sport is baseball.

### Exercise 3: Error Correction

1. He used to live in Colombia, which is a Spanish-speaking country
2. The woman whose name is Dina come from Tunisia.
3. Mitt Romney, who is a politician from Massachusetts might run for president.
4. Henrietta never talks to people who don't speak her language.
5. Jim works in a large company which is located in northern Quebec.
6. Messi, who was born in a small town in Argentina, won two championships.
7. Barbara has a house that overlooks the river.
8. She will never forget the day when it was her twenty-first birthday.
9. Ji Na comes from a place where it is very cold almost all year.
10. Bollywood, which is the movie capital of India, makes more films than Hollywood

### Exercise 4: Identify all the words in the following sentences.

John F. Kennedy, **who was assassinated in 1963**, was the youngest president in history.

The pizzeria **where we ate yesterday** served expensive food.

**My dog died yesterday**, which made me very sad.

Sunday is the day **when I sleep late**.

Greta went to the mall without me, **which was not a nice thing to do**.

Marta is the type of boss **who is easy to work with**.

Salmon is the meal **that I love best**.

Alexander Ovechkin, **who is an excellent hockey player**, comes from Russia.

Bacon and eggs, **which are inexpensive**, are my favorite breakfast food.

Joe's sister lives in Paris, **which is the capital of France**.

## Answer Key Continued

### Exercise 5: Sentence Stems

1. I would never marry a person **who smokes and drinks too much.**
2. My brother bought a dog **that was black and white.**
3. The doctor **who treated me** was from Pakistan.
4. She will never forget the day **when she got a promotion.**
5. Rosa fell in love with the man **whose brother works in Gino's Restaurant.**
6. **Elephants, which eat plants and bushes, are the largest animals in the world.**
7. **Last month, my brother bought a car that cost \$12,000.**
8. **Nestor met a woman who had written two books.**
9. **The ring that Josie gave her daughter was made of cubic zirconium, not real diamonds.**
10. **Hank Crowley wore a jacket that was black with white stripes.**

### Exercise 6: Thinking About Grammar

The book about which I told you came out last year.

The story I told you about was written in Chinese.

The novel that I was talking about was published in Korea in 2007.

**Notes: The first sentence is very formal and is usually only used in formal writing, not speaking. The second sentence is the most common. Notice that there is no relative pronoun. The third sentence is grammatically correct and fairly common.**

The man about whom I was talking is sitting in the corner.

The woman I was talking about is wearing the red dress.

The person that I was telling you about is my boss.

The girl who I told you about works with me.

**Notes: The first sentence is very formal and is usually only used in formal writing, not speaking. The second sentence is the most common. The third sentence, although grammatically correct, sounds strange because of the presence of “that” as the relative pronoun. The fourth sentence is grammatically correct, although many would prefer “whom” instead of “who”.**

The home in which I was brought up was on the same street as my school.

The house where I was raised had two floors.

The house I grew up in had a large kitchen.

**Notes: The first sentence is very formal and is usually only used in formal writing, not speaking. The second sentence is the most common. The third sentence is also common, but some strict grammar teachers would object to the “dangling preposition” in.**

## Answer Key Continued

### Exercise 7: Sentence Structures

1. The man who stole my car was wearing a black mask. **[no punctuation]**
2. Bill O'Grady comes from a small town[, ] which means that everyone knows everyone else.
3. She saw a picture of Joe's brother Paul[, ] who has a scar on his nose.
4. The photograph in the magazine showed a woman whose hair was very short. **[no punctuation]**
5. Henry has two sisters[, ] whose names are Nicolette and Anna.
6. Dr. Seismore[, ] who is a retired obstetrician[, ] still loves to talk to pregnant women.
7. The meal that Connie served last night was spicy[, ] which meant that I drank water all night.
8. Hal has fond memories of his hometown[, ] which is located on a lake.
9. Bobby met his girlfriend in Asti's restaurant[, ] where the servers sing during the meal.
10. That is Betsy[, ] about whom I was telling you five minutes ago.

### Exercise 8: Sentence Structures

1. The food that John cooked last night tasted very bad. **[no punctuation]**
2. Enza is a vegetarian[, ] which means that she does not eat meat.
3. Charlie[, ] who loves fish[, ] eats just about anything.
4. George[, ] who is a Vietnam veteran[, ] supports most wars.
5. The student whose grammar book was left in the classroom is studying with Dr. Lopez. **[no punctuation]**
6. Hyenas[, ] which live in Africa[, ] are very fast runners.
7. The bear that Nestor shot last week is now on display in his living room. **[no punctuation]**
8. Ken has two grandmothers[, ] who both live in London.
9. The man who sold Bob the stolen watch was arrested last week. **[no punctuation]**
10. I have never been to Vietnam[, ] which is located in southeast Asia.

### Exercise 9: Compose the Following Sentences

1. Abraham Lincoln, who was born in a log cabin, was given little formal education.
2. Abraham Lincoln, whose family later moved to Illinois, was born in a log cabin.
3. Abraham Lincoln, whom John Wilkes Booth shot, died on April 15, 1865.
4. In the same year the Civil War began, and he claimed broad executive powers which some people said were dictatorial.
5. He was elected in 1860, when the Civil War began.
6. He held several jobs in Illinois, where his law practice became successful.
7. He suffered through several serious defeats, one of which was the first Battle of Bull Run.

### Exercise 10: Review Test

- |       |      |       |       |       |       |       |
|-------|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 1. b  | 2. b | 3. a  | 4. c  | 5. b  | 6. d  | 7. c  |
| 8. a  | 9. b | 10. b | 11. d | 12. b | 13. a | 14. c |
| 15. a |      |       |       |       |       |       |