

What Are Relative Pronouns & Antecedents?

Relative Pronouns

A relative **pronoun** is used to refer to **nouns** mentioned previously. They are also used to join two sentences.

The most common relative pronouns are **who, whom, whose, which, that, and those**. Sometimes **when** and **where** can be used as relative pronouns as well.

Who is used to refer to a person (as the verb's subject).

Whom is used to refer to a person (as the verb's object).

Which is used to refer to an animal, thing, or idea.

That is used to refer to a person, animal, thing, or idea.

Antecedents

An **antecedent** is a noun that a pronoun refers to.

Example:

The lady, who was here to see you yesterday, called again this morning

In this sentence, **who** is the relative pronoun and because it refers to "**the lady**", the lady is the antecedent here.

To ensure clarity, place an antecedent immediately before the **relative pronoun** referring to it.

In the following sentences, circle the relative pronouns and underline the antecedents.

1. Bring me the letters that are on the table.
2. Pluck the tomatoes that are red and ripe.
3. Is this the train that leaves for London at 5 o'clock?
4. Are these the books which I need to read?
5. The shirt is made from material that doesn't need ironing.
6. Everybody appreciated the war story that he told us.
7. Can you point out the earrings that you want to try?
8. Have you received the box that I sent to you from California?
9. The doctors could not save the man who had fallen from the cable car.
10. She knew very little of the girl with whom she had signed up for the project.
11. Abigail has a dog, which she had found on the streets.
12. The owl, which lives on the tree outside my window, came into my room yesterday.
13. The cyclist, who won the race, practiced regularly.
14. There is this guy who eats everybody's lunch at work.
15. The dress that I bought yesterday got stained.