RELATIVE CLAUSES.

1-What is a relative clause?
A relative clause is a part of a sentence. This means it looks like a sentence, but it can’t stand by itself. This means if we use it alone, it will not have any meaning, simply because it is not a complete sentence but it depends on another one to complete its meaning.

For example: Obama, **who** is the president of America, is a famous person.

The relative clause is “**who** is the president of America”. It is not an independent sentence because if you put it alone, it will not have any meaning.

So a relative clause in fact is a “sentence” because it contains a SUBJECT + VERB +….. But; it is not independent.

2-What do relative clauses do?
Relative clauses, as you can see in the example above, give more (additional) information about a noun. This noun can be the noun of a place, a person or a thing.

In the example above, the relative clause: ”**who** is the president of America” gives more information about “Obama”.

It says that **he is the president of America**.

3-How do we make a relative clause?

A relative clause is linked (related) to the noun before it by a relative pronoun/adverb.

In the example above: (Obama, who is the president of America, is a famous person.) normally we have two sentences. They are:

a- Obama is a famous person.  
b- He (Obama) is the president of America.

So, what do we do then?

Very simple! To avoid the repetition of the word “Obama”, we just link (relate) the second sentence to the first. And we get: “Obama, **who** is the president of America, is a famous person.”

You can see that nothing is really changing in the second sentence. We just take out “he” and put in its place “who”. This is the relative pronoun:”who”.

4-How do we decide which relative pronoun/adverb we use?

Very simple indeed. Just think about the words we use in asking questions. They are called the “wh-words”.

So, what are they?

➢ To ask a question about a place/thing we use the word “which”

For example, we say: **which car** do you drive to work? **which book** do you prefer? **which foot-ball club** do you like? **Which Moroccan city** do you love?

➢ To ask a question about a person we use the word “who”

For example, we say: A: **who** is your teacher of English?  B: Mr Redouan is my teacher of English.

➢ To ask a question about an adverb of place, we use the word “where”.

For example, we say:
A: **where** do you live?  B: I live **in Tinghir**.

LOOOOOOOOOOOOOOK! The place here in this example is different from the first example above in which we use “which”.

What is the difference?

THE DIFFERENCE IS IN THIS EXAMPLE THE PLACE IS PRECEDED BY (مسبقة ب) A PREPOSITION. THAT’S WHAT MAKES IT AN ADVERB of place.

We have “**in Tinghir**;” not “Tinghir”*******REMEMBER THEN: If you have a place preceded by a preposition that’s an adverb of place. Then you should use the relative adverb” where” in the relative clause. You will have an example below.

We say for example:  
A: where is the bank?  B: the bank is **behind the post office**.
So the preposition (in, behind, on, under, at, after, below…) makes the name of the place an adverb in the sentences above.

That’s why we have to use “where” when we are relating a sentence containing an adverb of place to another sentence.

➢ To ask a question about an adverb of time, we use the word “when”.

For example, we say: “when do you go to school?” B:” I go to school at nine o’clock.”

Looooooool again: what makes “nine o’clock” an adverb here is just the preposition which comes before: “at”.

So, when you have a preposition (on, in, at, before….) + a time word (9:00-Monday-2010-1976-march…) = adverb of time.

You should then use the word “when” to link this time adverb to another sentence. You will have an example below.

➢ There is still another “wh-word” which we use in questions.

We say for example: A: “whose book is this one? B:” it is ahmed’s book” // B: ” it is the book of Ahmed”.

Or still B:” it is my/your/her… book”

So this is what we call the “possessive”. This means “A of B” or “B’s A”.

You can sometimes have also a possessive adjective:” my book/ your book/ her book/ his book/ their book/ its head”.

So whenever you have a noun followed by another noun and there is a relation of possession between the two nouns, use the word “whose” to link the second noun to the first one. You will see an example below.

NOW REMEMBER THIS AND GO WITH ME TO THE NEXT PART:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TO REPLACE A</th>
<th>FUNCTION IN THE SENTENCE.</th>
<th>WE USE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>person</td>
<td>subject</td>
<td>Who/that</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>person</td>
<td>object</td>
<td>Whom/who</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thing</td>
<td>subject</td>
<td>Which/that</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thing</td>
<td>object</td>
<td>Which/that</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>place</td>
<td>adverb</td>
<td>where</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>time</td>
<td>adverb</td>
<td>when</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possessive(ahmed’s/his/my/her/Mor occo’s…)</td>
<td>whose</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5-How do we form relative clauses?

Now remember the words above and try to link the sentences below using the correct word:

1- A- Messi is an Argentinean player. B- Messi plays for F.C Barcelona.

Look! the word which is repeated is” Messi”. “Messi” is a person and it is the subject of the sentence B so we should use “who”.

Don’t forget that the relative pronoun/adverb must be immediately AFTER the word it refers to/replaces.

So we will say: 1-Messi, who plays for F.C Barcelona, is an Argentinean player.
A- Messi is an Argentinean foot-ball player.      B- I love Messi a lot.  
Look now! The word which is repeated is “Messi” again. But this time it has a different function in sentence B. Compare the sentences and see the difference. “Messi” in sentence 1B is SUBJECT (Messi plays.......).But, in sentence 2B it is OBJECT (I love Messi).  
SO REMEMBER THAT NOW THE WORD WHICH WE MUST USE TO REPLACE “Messi” IN THE SECOND SENTENCE IS “Whom”.  
We use “who” when the person we are replacing is “subject” and “ whom” when it is the OBJECT as in 2B.  
The sentence then will be:  
2-Messi, whom I love a lot, is an Argentinean foot-ball player.  
(NB in some references using “who” for a person object is also correct.so: -2-Messi, who I love a lot, is an Argentinean foot-ball player. –is acceptable as well)  
3- A- F.C Barcelona is very famous In Morocco.         B- F.C Barcelona is a Spanish team.  
Now the repeated word is “F.C Barcelona”. What is it? It is a club –not a person. What about its function in sentence 3? It is SUBJECT. So to replace something which is subject, we use “which”.  
The sentence 3 will then be:  
3-F.C Barcelona, which is a Spanish club, is very famous in Morocco.  
To replace a word which is something like: team/club/book/house/my country/English…..) we use “which”.  
4- A- F.C Barcelona is very famous in Morocco.        B- I watch F.C Barcelona a lot.  
The word which is repeated again is F.C Barcelona. But now it is different again. How? in sentence 3B “F.C Barcelona” is SUBJECT. But now in sentence 4B it is not subject; it is “OBJECT”: “I watch F.C Barcelona”.  
So, to replace a word which is something/subject, we use “which” AND to replace a word which is something/OBJECT we use “which” also. In both cases use “WHICH”. The sentence 4 A and B will then be:  
4-F.C Barcelona, which I watch a lot, is very famous in Morocco.  
5- A- Morocco is a wonderful country.                       B- I live in Morocco.  
Now remember what I said above about a preposition + noun of place = ADVERB OF PLACE.  
So when we have an adverb of place we use the relative adverb “where”. Sentence 5 then will be:  
5-Morocco, where I live, is a wonderful country.  
6- A- The UN was formed in 1945                                 B- the World War 2 ended in 1945.  
The repeated word now is an EDVERB OF TIME: in 1945. Remember that preposition + time = an adverb of time.  
So to replace an adverb of time, we use the relative adverb “when”. Sentence 6 will then be:  
6-The UN was formed in 1945, when the World War 2 ended.  
7- A- Morocco is in North Africa.                                    B- The people of Morocco are friendly.// Its people are friendly.  
As you can see, in the sentence B we have the possessive in the three examples.  
So when you have the possessive, we use the relative pronoun “whose”.  
To join the two sentences A and B above then, we will say:  
7-Morocco, whose people are friendly, is in North Africa.  
Another example about the use of “whose” is:  
A- English is an international language.                     B- Its speakers are numerous.  
We will say then: English, whose speakers are numerous, is an international language.  
Now an example with a “person”:  
A-Rashid is my best friend                                  B- His (Rashid’s) father is a teacher.  
Rashid whose father is a teacher is my best friend.
6-What about the comma (,)?
You may have noticed that in most of the examples above, I use a comma before and after the relative clause. But, look to the last example about Rashid and you will see that I haven’t used a comma. Why? Is the comma important? Of course to use a comma (,) or not to use it is very important.

****When do we use a comma?
We use a comma in relative clauses when the clause is not important; when you can take it out without having any problem in the meaning of the sentence.
For example, in the sentence: **F.C Barcelona, which is a Spanish club, is very famous in Morocco.**
We have a comma before the relative clause and another one after because everybody knows FC Barcelona, so we really don’t need the relative clause. We can just say: “**F.C Barcelona, which is a Spanish club, is very famous in Morocco.**” Without having any problem in the meaning of the sentence.
So the relative clause here is **“non-defining”; it doesn’t define the word”FC Barcelona”.** So we can simply delete it.

REMEMBER: relative clause is not important = use the commas.

****When shouldn’t we use the commas?
Just have a look at the last example above: “**Rashid whose father is a teacher is my best friend.**”
As you can see, there is no comma before or after the relative clause. WHY?
Because it is very important for the understanding of the word “Rashid». We have a lot of Rashids.
So imagine I say: A:”**Rashid is my best friend.**” What will you say? You will say: B:”**who is this Rashid?**”
And I will answer: A: “**Rashid whose father is a teacher**”.

So the relative clause is very important. It is a “defining” relative clause. It defines which Rashid I am speaking about; not Rashid who is a taxi driver/not Rashid whose father is a doctor but I am speaking about **Rashid whose father is a teacher**.
Go and revise the examples above and pay attention to the comma(.)


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