

## What's an adjective?

To understand what an adjective clause is, we need to understand what adjectives and clauses are. Most of you probably know what an adjective is. In English, adjectives are used to modify or describe nouns. For example, adjectives can show size, color, emotion, and quantity. Here are some sentences with adjectives. Can you identify them?

- Mary bought a red sweater at the department store for her mother.
- The sweater was too small.
- Mary felt very disappointed.
- Mary's mother received nice gifts for her birthday.

## The different kinds of adjective clauses

Before we can talk about how to make adjective clauses, let me give you some examples of the different kinds of adjective clauses. Click on the green question mark to understand the different types better.

### ? Subject Adjective Clauses

The people **who came to my party** had a good time.

### ? Object Adjective Clauses

The turkey **that my father cooked** was delicious.

### ? Possessive Adjective Clauses

The woman **whose baby cried during dinner** was my sister, Karen.

### ? Location Adjective Clauses

The house **where we had the party** belongs to my Uncle Kenneth.

## When do we use adjective clauses?

Adjective clauses are often used to make clear which person or thing we are writing or talking about. For example, you have a picture of three dinosaurs. Adjective clauses can help the reader or listener know which one you are referring to when you give their names.

The dinosaur **that is on the left** is a brontosaurus.

The dinosaur **that is in the middle** is a tyrannosaurus rex.

The dinosaur **that is on the right** is a stegasaurus.

When an adjective clause is used to tell the reader or listener "which one" or "which ones," no commas are used. All of the examples we have seen so far are this type of adjective clause.

Here is another example. We are discussing different groups of students. The adjective clauses explain which group we are referring to.

The students **who eat a good breakfast** do better in class.

The students **who skip breakfast** cannot concentrate in class.

All the rules we have learned about adjective clauses so far are for this type of adjective clause.