

Reduced relative clauses

prepositional phrase

omit

Sometimes, we can reduce the length of a relative clause that contains the verb "be" by omitting the relative pronoun and the verb "be". Three common situations in which we can do this are:

- 1) When the main verb in the relative clause is in the continuous form. For example, instead of saying "The girl **who is wearing** the yellow hat is my sister", we can say "The girl **wearing** the yellow hat is my sister".
- 2) When the main verb in the relative clause is in the passive voice. For example, instead of saying "The teenagers **who were arrested** will probably go to prison", we can say "The teenagers **arrested** will probably go to prison".
- 3) When the relative pronoun and the verb "be" are followed by a prepositional phrase. For example, instead of saying "The pen **which is on the table** is mine", we can say "The pen **on the table** is mine".

Note that, although there are exceptions, we normally reduce defining rather than non-defining relative clauses. For example, we would not choose to reduce the (non-defining) relative clause in the following sentence: "My mother, who is taking piano lessons now, clearly has no talent".

Also note that, when we reduce a relative clause, we can only omit the verb "be" when the relative pronoun is the subject. For example, the sentence "The picture **that is hanging** on the wall looks great" can be reduced to "The picture **hanging** on the wall looks great" because the relative pronoun "that" is the subject. However, in the sentence "The picture **that John is painting** looks great", the subject of the relative clause is the word "John" (the word "that" is, in fact, the object). Therefore, we cannot reduce the relative clause by omitting the verb "be" (and so we cannot say "The picture John painting looks great").

bring about

radical

try one's hand at

craft

inflation

soar

throb

pulse

vein

rehearse

rehearsal

run through

outgoing

mingle

good

frantic

insight

perk

caffeine

childcare

healthcare

grudge

smear



bystander

motive

1180

withstand

come off

fall through

conscientious

enterprise

sector

smoulder

smother

extinguish

1181

horrified

picturesque

stand by

orphan

panel

debate

current affairs

timid