

Relative Clauses: Formal versus Informal

In formal English, use the relative pronoun **who** for human subjects in a relative clause. Use **whom** for human objects in a relative clause.

Examples:

This is the technician we hired to fix the computers. (most informal)

This is the technician that we hired to fix the computers. (informal)

This is the technician who we hired to fix the computers. (formal)

This is the technician whom we hired to fix the computers. (most formal)

In formal writing, do not separate a preposition from its object. Put the preposition before the relative pronoun. In these cases use **whom** or **which**, not **who** or **that**.

Examples:

That's the job I'm interested in. (most informal)

That's the job that I'm interested in. (informal)

That's the job which I'm interested in. (formal)

That's the job in which I'm interested. (most formal)

NOT: That's the job in that I'm interested. (use **which**)

That's the singer about who I told you. (use **whom**)

Rewrite these sentences using formal English.

1. The environment is a problem many people are worried about.

2. Austria is one of the countries we went to on our vacation.

3. This is the lawyer I work with.

4. That is the doctor I recommended.

5. David is one of the people I respect.
