

# That in relative clauses

That is commonly used as a relative pronoun in identifying relative clauses. As a relative pronoun that can refer to things. In an informal style, it can also refer to people.

Where is the girl that sells the flowers? (OR Where is the girl who sells the flowers?)

The necklace that she gave me was very expensive. (OR The necklace which she gave me was very expensive.)

This is the house that Jack built. (OR This is the house which Jack built.)

The cat killed the rat that ate the corn. (OR The cat killed the rat which ate the corn.)

In non-identifying clauses that is unusual. Instead we use who or which.

This is Mary, who sells the flowers. (NOT This is Mary that sells the flowers.) (Here the relative clause is non-identifying and therefore it cannot be introduced by that.)

That is common after quantifiers like all, everything, anything, something, nothing, none, little, few, much, only and after superlatives.

Have you got anything that might impress him?

The only thing that matters is to stay happy.

It is the best film that has ever been made about faith.

Note that what cannot be used in these cases.

All that he says is not true. (NOT All what he says is not true.)