

Whose (PT: “de quem”)

“Whose” is a pronoun used in questions to ask who owns something – it’s about possession. The word “whose” is the possessive form of “who”.

“whose” = “belongs to whom”

“Whose book is this?” is the same as “To whom does the book belong?”

1. The verb “to be”

In English, when we use the verb “**to be**”, there are two possible structures when we use the word “whose”:

a) Whose + object(s) + **to be** ?

b) Whose + **to be** + object(s) ?

The second structure is similar to Portuguese, but English natives prefer to use the first structure, since it’s more commonly used with other verbs (see Page 2). Here are some examples:

Preferred structure

Whose book **is** this?

Whose car **is** in the garage?

Whose pen **is** on the floor?

Whose glasses **are** in the car?

Whose boy **was** at the party?

Whose team **will be** on shift?

Whose boy **is** badly-behaved?

Alternative structure (similar to Portuguese)

Whose **is** this book?

Whose **is** the car in the garage?

Whose **is** the pen on the floor?

Whose **are** the glasses in the car?

Whose **was** the boy at the party?

Whose **will be** the team on shift?

Whose **is** this badly-behaved boy?

Exercise. Translate these sentences to English.

1. De quem é o cachorro no canto?

2. De quem é o caderno rasgado?

3. De quem é a caneta quebrada?

4. De quem são os gatinhos na caixa?

5. De quem são os sapatos ali?

6. De quem era o carro que estava na garagem ontem?

Indirect questions

The word “whose” can also be used in indirect questions and the responses. For example:

A: Do you know whose car this is?

B: Yes, I know whose car it is.

A: Can you see whose phone is ringing?

B: No, I can’t see whose phone it is.

2. Other verbs

When we use the word “whose” with other verbs, there are also two possible structures:

a) “**Whose _____**” as a question word: Whose + object + **auxiliary verb** ?

For example: A: Whose car **do** you prefer? B: I prefer Bob’s car.

Similar to: A: Which car **do** you prefer? B: I prefer the black car.

Note: The question is about the object of the verb phrase.

Here are some more examples:

- A: Whose car **did** you drive yesterday? B: I drove Bob’s car.
- A: Whose book **did** you borrow in the last class? B: I borrowed Bob’s book.
- A: Whose bicycle **do** you want to ride? B: I want to ride Bob’s bicycle.
- A: Whose son **will** you choose to be captain? B: I will choose Bob’s son.
- A: Whose cake **do** you want to taste? B: I want to taste Bob’s cake.

Exercise. Translate these sentences to English.

1. De quem é a casa que você vendeu ontem? _____
2. De quem é o carro que você viu na garagem? _____
3. De quem era o gato que você atropelou? _____
4. De quem você pegou a caneta emprestada? _____

b) “**Whose _____**” as an interrogative pronoun: Whose + object + **verb** ?

For example: A: Whose pen **broke**? B: Bob’s pen **broke**.

Similar to: A: Which pen **broke**? B: The black pen **broke**.

Note: The question is about the subject of the verb phrase.

Here are some more examples:

- A: Whose phone **rang** just now? B: Bob’s phone **rang**.
- A: Whose phone **is ringing**? B: Bob’s phone **is ringing**.
- A: Whose parents **are going** to the party? B: Bob’s parents **are going**.
- A: Whose house **has** two floors? B: Bob’s house **has** two floors.
- A: Whose pencil **needs** sharpening? B: Bob’s pencil **needs** sharpening.

Exercise. Translate these sentences to English.

1. De quem é o carro que foi pintado? _____
2. De quem é o telefone que quebrou? _____
3. De quem são os pais que falam francês? _____
4. De quem são os sapatos que fazem barulho? _____

Note:

The word “whose” can also mean “cujo(a)” in Portuguese:

- Do you know the boy whose father is a politician?
- I met a girl whose brother can speak 10 languages.
- Do you know the guy whose restaurant was robbed yesterday?
- I have a new student whose husband will be the new deputy mayor.