

Which vs. That

When do you use *which*?

- **Which** is used when you're writing with *non-essential clauses*. So, what are *non-essential clauses*?
 - *Non-essential clauses* are also referred to as non-restrictive or non-defining clauses
 - These clauses do not limit the meaning of the sentence. The meaning of the sentence will not change without the non-essential clause.
 - Example:
 - A paper, **which** has a tight deadline, might be tough to write.
 - A paper might be tough to write.

When do you use *that*?

- **That** is used when you're writing with *essential clauses*. So, what are *essential clauses*?
 - Essential clauses are also referred to as restrictive or defining clauses.
 - These clauses impact the meaning of the sentence. They are thus essential to the sentence's structure and meaning.
 - Example:
 - This paper **that** has a tight deadline is tough to write.
 - "**That** has a tight deadline" defines the *type* of paper and is thus essential to the paper's meaning.

Some points to keep in mind:

- **Which** adds information or context to a sentence.
- **That** refers to specific things.

Resources:

- Purdue OWL [That vs. Which](#)
- Grammarly [Which vs. That](#)

Citation Information:

Prof. Scanlon compiled this document; she updated it September 2022 to be more accessible. If you notice an error, need it in a different format, or have further questions or concerns, please email her at scanlon1@kenyon.edu or stop by and visit one of our tutors in Chalmers library!