

1 Here's the Idea

▶ A noun clause is a subordinate clause used as a noun.

You can use a noun clause as a subject, a direct object, an indirect object, a predicate nominative, or an object of a preposition.

SUBJECT

Whatever you want to do is fine with me.

DIRECT OBJECT

Some people say **that heredity determines personality**.

INDIRECT OBJECT

They give **whatever we have as our genetic makeup** the credit or blame for many personality traits.

PREDICATE NOMINATIVE

Another influence can be **whom you select as friends**.

OBJECT OF A PREPOSITION

You may be influenced by **what you learn from your family**.

You can often tighten your writing by eliminating *that* from a noun clause.

Some people say that heredity determines personality.

You can also use a noun clause as the direct object of a verbal or as an appositive.

DIRECT OBJECT OF A GERUND

Learning how birth order can influence personality can be interesting.

DIRECT OBJECT OF AN INFINITIVE

To understand how the human personality develops, you can read books on the subject.

APPOSITIVE

How does attitude, **whatever your outlook is,** relate to personality?

For a review of the parts of speech, see p. 4.

Words Used to Introduce Noun Clauses

Pronouns	what, whatever, which, whichever, who, whoever, whom, whomever, whose
Subordinating conjunctions	how, that, when, where, whether, why

To decide whether to use *whoever* or *whomever*, look only at the clause itself. Try mentally substituting the words *he* and *him* in the clause. If *he* fits, use *who* or *whoever*. If *him* works, use *whom* or *whomever*.

Sari befriends **whoever** is nice to her.

He is nice to her.
Him