

Who and Whom

The Never Ending Confusion

The main thing to remember when choosing which pronoun to use is this:

- WHO is the subject, which means it is doing the action.
- WHOM as an object, which means it is receiving the action.

WHO AND WHOEVER

- **Who** is going to the store with me?
 - Here, “who” is *doing the action* of “going.”
- Please assist **whoever** needs help.
 - In this case, “whoever” is doing *the action* of “needing.”
- Kim and **who** are going to the dance?
 - Here, “who” is *doing the action* of “going” just like Kim is.

WHOM AND WHOMEVER

- They asked me with **whom** I was going to the dance.
 - In this sentence, “I” am doing the action of “going,” and “whom” refers to the person I am taking; therefore, “whom” *receives the action*.
- He is the professor **whom** most people prefer for that class.
 - Here, “people” are doing the action of “preferring” and “whom” is what the people prefer; therefore, “whom” *receives the action*.
- Take with you **whomever** you please.
 - “You” is doing the action of taking and “whomever” refers to the person you are taking; therefore, “whomever” is *receiving the action*.

Check the next page for some helpful hints!!!

Hint #1: Rearrange the sentence:

Who/Whom should we take to the dance?

becomes

We should take **who/whom** to the dance.

In this sentence, the pronoun that should be used is “whom” because “we” are doing the “taking” and “whom” is *receiving that action*.

Who/Whom did he complain about?

becomes

He did complain about **who/whom**?

Here, the word “whom” should be used because “he” is doing the “complaining” and “whom” is the one *receiving that action*.

Hint #2: Check to see if WHO/WHOM is followed by a verb:

Whoever/Whomever went to the store should buy me a present.

“Whoever” is *doing the action* of going because it is the subject of the sentence.

He is the one **who/whom** I think bought my old books.

Although the “who” is separated from the verb “bought,” “who” is still *doing the action* of “buying.”

Hint #3: Try replacing **WHO/WHOM** with he (which always does the action) him (which is always being acted upon) and see which of those pronouns work:

Who/Whom is going to the store? becomes either:

He is going to the store. OR Him is going to the store.

Since “he” is *doing the action of going*, “who” should be used.

Plus, we can hear that “Him is going to the store” sounds incorrect.

She is going to the store with **who/whom**? becomes either

She is going to the store with he. OR She is going to the store with him

“Him” is *receiving the action* of “going,” so “whom” should be used.

Also, we can hear that “She is going to the store with he” sounds incorrect.