



ESPERANTO LESSON

Esperanto Grammar 1 · Chapter 6 · The Correlatives

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Chapter 6 · The Correlatives

1234 The Correlatives — La korelativoj

Who, what, which, where, when, how, why, whose, how much: and their answers, that one, there, then, everywhere, never. English has dozens of these words with no pattern. Esperanto has 45, and all of them come from one grid: five beginnings times nine endings. Learn the grid and you have learnt all of them at once.

THE RULE IN ONE BOX

The beginning says **what kind of word**: **ki-** asks, **ti-** points, **i-** means "some", **ĉi-** means "every", **neni-** means "no".
The ending says **what it is about**: a person or thing (**-u**), a thing (**-o**), a kind (**-a**), a place (**-e**), a time (**-am**), a manner (**-el**), a reason (**-al**), a possessor (**-es**), an amount (**-om**).

The grid

ENDING → BEGINNING ↓	-U ONE (OF THEM)	-O THING	-A KIND	-E PLACE	-AM TIME	-EL MANNER	-AL REASON	-ES OF WHOM	-OM AMOUNT
ki- question, relative	kiu who, which	kio what	kia what kind of	kie where	kiam when	kiel how	kial why	kies whose	kiom how much
ti- that	tiu that one	tio that	tia such	tie there	tiam then	tiel so, thus	tial therefore	ties that one's	tiom that much
i- some	iu someone	io something	ia some kind of	ie somewhere	iam sometime	iel somehow	ial for some reason	ies someone's	iom a little
ĉi- every	ĉiu everyone, each	ĉio everything	ĉia every kind of	ĉie everywhere	ĉiam always	ĉiel in every way	ĉial for every reason	ĉies everyone's	ĉiom all of it
neni- no	neniu no one	nenio nothing	nenia no kind of	nenie nowhere	neniam never	neniel in no way	nenial for no reason	nenies no one's	neniom none, not at all

Forty-five words, but only five beginnings and nine endings to remember. The table is regular, and the endings also hold across the row: every word ending in **-e** is a place, every word ending in **-am** is a time. Some of the less-used forms (**tial**, **ial**, **ĉial**, **nenial**, **ies**, **ĉies**, **neniel**) are rare in everyday speech, but they exist, and you can use them with confidence (check how common each is).

English has a half-grid, Hungarian has most of one

English shows the pattern for place and time: *where, there, somewhere, everywhere, nowhere* and *when, then, sometime, always, never*. Hungarian has a grid too, built from *ki, mi, hol, mikor* with *vala-* (some), *mind-* (every) and *sen-* (no): *valaki, mindenki, senki* (check). Esperanto simply makes every cell regular.

Agreement: -j and -n

The **-u** and **-a** forms behave like adjectives and take **-j** and **-n**. The **-o** forms behave like nouns and take **-n** as objects. The **-e** forms take **-n** to show direction. The rest never change.

FORM	EXAMPLES
-u	tiu libro that book · tiuj libroj those books · tiun libron · tiujn librojn
-a	kia libro what kind of book · kian libron
-o	Kio estas tio? What is that? · Kion vi legas? What are you reading?
-e	Kie vi estas? Where are you? · Kien vi iras? Where are you going? · tie / tien
others	kiam, kiel, kial, kies, kiom: no endings

Using the table

Questions (ki-)

ESPERANTO	ENGLISH
Kiu estas tiu viro?	Who is that man?
Kiun libron vi legas?	Which book are you reading?
Kian libron vi legas?	What kind of book are you reading?
Kiam vi venos?	When will you come?
Kiel vi fartas?	How are you?
Kial vi ridetas?	Why are you smiling?
Kies libro estas ĉi tio?	Whose book is this?
Kiom kostas la kafo?	How much does the coffee cost?

Kiu picks one from a group ("which one"), and **kiu** asks about a thing in general ("what"). **Kia** asks about quality ("what kind of"). For quantities, **kiom** is followed by **da** and a noun: **kiom da homoj** (how many people).

Pointing (ti-) and this/that

The **ti-** words mean *that*. For *this*, put **ĉi** next to it: **ĉi tiu** or **tiu ĉi** (this one), **ĉi tio** (this), **ĉi tie** (here). So **tie** is there and **ĉi tie** is here. This **ĉi** is a separate word, not the prefix **ĉi-** of **ĉiu**.

Some, every, none

ESPERANTO	ENGLISH
Iu venis hieraŭ.	Someone came yesterday.
Mi havas iom da tempo.	I have a little time.
Ĉiu homo havas amikon.	Every person has a friend.
Mi ĉiam trinkas teon.	I always drink tea.
Mi neniam trinkas vinon.	I never drink wine.
Neniu estas hejme.	Nobody is at home.

Note that **neniam** and **neniu** are already negative, so there is no extra **ne**: **Mi neniam trinkas**, not *Mi ne neniam trinkas*. Chapter 8 covers this rule.

Relative clauses: kiu and kio

A relative clause describes a noun, as in English *the man who lives there*. In Esperanto the linking word is **kiu** (who, which, that), and there is always a comma before it. **Kiu** takes **-j** if what it stands for is plural and **-n** if it is the object of the clause it introduces:

ESPERANTO	ENGLISH
La viro, kiu loĝas tie, estas mia amiko.	The man who lives there is my friend.
La libro, kiun mi legas, estas bona.	The book that I am reading is good.
La libroj, kiujn mi legas, estas bonaj.	The books that I am reading are good.
Mi komprenas ĉion, kion vi diras.	I understand everything that you say.

Use **kio** instead of **kiu** after **tio**, **ĉio**, **nenio** and other words that stand for "thing": **tio, kion mi diris** (what I said, literally "that which I said").

Watch out: the case of kiu comes from its own clause

In *La libro, kiun mi legas*, **kiun** has **-n** because it is the object of **legas** inside the relative clause, even though the book is the subject of the main clause. Ask yourself what *kiu* is doing in its own clause. Compare this with English, where *who/whom/that* and often nothing at all can be used.

In Use — En uzo

Read each exchange aloud and pick out the correlatives.

① Finding the station

A:

Kie estas la stacidomo?
Where is the station?

B:

Tie, post la ponto.
There, beyond the bridge.

A:

Kiom da tempo mi bezonas?
How much time do I need?

B:

Nur iom da tempo.
Only a little time.

② A very full book

A:

Kio estas ĉi tio?
What is this?

B:

Ĝi estas Esperanto-libro. Ĝi enhavas ĉion, kion vi bezonas.
It's an Esperanto book. It contains everything you need.

A:

Mi neniam vidis tiom da vortoj!
I've never seen so many words!

③ When?

A:

Kiam vi venos?
When will you come?

B:

Mi venos morgaŭ, sed mi ofte venas malfrue.
I'll come tomorrow, but I often come late.

A:

Ĉu ĉiam malfrue?
Always late?

B:

Ne ĉiam. Iam mi venas frue.
Not always. Sometimes I come early.

Quick Reference — Rapida referenco

BEGINNING	MEANING	ENDING	MEANING
ki-	question, relative	-u	one of a group (takes -j -n)
ti-	that, pointing	-o	a thing (takes -n)
i-	some	-a	a kind (takes -j -n)
ĉi-	every	-e	place (-n for direction)
neni-	no	-am -el -al -es -om	time, manner, reason, possessor, amount

Try It Yourself — Ekzercoj

Say the answer first, then click to check.

1. Make the words for "there", "somewhere", "everywhere" and "nowhere".

▼ Show answer

tie, ie, ĉie, nenie.

2. Say "everyone", "everything" and "no one".

▼ Show answer

ĉiu, ĉio, neniu.

3. Say "always" and "never", and put "never" in *I never come*.

▼ Show answer

ĉiam, neniam. Mi neniam venas. (No extra *ne*.)

4. Ask "When do you come?" and "Where are you going?"

▼ Show answer

Kiam vi venas? and Kien vi iras? (*kien* because you are asking about direction).

5. Translate "Which book are you reading?" and "What kind of book are you reading?"

▼ Show answer

Kiun libron vi legas? and Kian libron vi legas?

6. How do you say "this one" and "that one", and "here" and "there"?

▼ Show answer

ĉi tiu (or tiu ĉi) and tiu; ĉi tie and tie.

7. Translate "The man who lives there is my friend."

▼ Show answer

La viro, kiu loĝas tie, estas mia amiko.

8. Translate "The book that I am reading is good." Why *kiun*?

▼ Show answer

La libro, kiun mi legas, estas bona. *kiun* has *-n* because it is the object of *legas* in its own clause.

9. Translate "I understand everything that you say."

▼ Show answer

Mi komprenas ĉion, kion vi diras. After *ĉio* use *kio* (here as the object, *kion*).

10. Ask "Why?", "Whose book is this?" and "How much does it cost?"

▼ Show answer

Kial?, **Kies libro estas ĉi tio?** and **Kiom ĝi kostas?**

Words used in this chapter

The 45 correlatives (see the grid) · **ĉi** this, here · **da** of (after a quantity) · **kosti** cost · **bezoni** need · **enhavi** contain · **kompreni** understand · **diri** say · **stacidomo** station · **ponto** bridge · **post** after, behind · **frue** early · **malfrue** late · **ofte** often · **hejme** at home · **vino** wine · **sed** but

Coming up in Chapter 7: Participles, Prepositions and Numbers. The six participles, every preposition with its one meaning, and how to count, tell the time and give the date.