Using *Which* and *That*

What is the purpose of *which* and *that*?

*Which* and *that* are words that help introduce new or additional information in sentences.

**Which** is used...

⇒ To add non-essential information

This means that the information can be removed without changing the meaning of the sentence. These clauses are also known as *non-restrictive* clauses. *Which* clauses are enclosed by commas—think about them as “handlebars,” which the reader can use to pull the information out of the sentence.

**Which** looks like...

- Daytona Beach which is a favorite spring break destination for college students has cracked down on underage drinking.

- Daytona Beach, which is a favorite spring break destination for college students, has cracked down on underage drinking.

**That** is used...

⇒ To add essential information

This means that the added information is necessary in order for the reader to understand the sentence. These clauses are also known as *restrictive* clauses. In this case, do not enclose the clause in commas.

**That** looks like...

- Chairs, that don’t have cushions, are uncomfortable.

- Chairs that don’t have cushions are uncomfortable.