

ENGLISH

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Reported Speech

It is often also called indirect speech in English. When we use reported speech, we are usually talking about the past (because obviously the person who spoke originally spoke in the past). The verbs therefore usually have to be in the past too.

For example:

Direct speech: *I've lost my umbrella.*

Reported speech: *He said (that) he had lost his umbrella.*

▪ Tense Changes in Reported Speech

When changing from direct to indirect speech, you need to change the grammar in certain ways.

Verb tense forms usually need to change. The tenses generally move backwards in this way:

- **Present Simple Tense** into **Past Simple Tense**
- **Present Continuous Tense** into **Past Continuous Tense**
- **Present Perfect Tense** into **Past Perfect Tense**
- **Past Simple Tense** into **Past Perfect Tense**
- **Past Continuous Tense** into **Past Perfect Continuous Tense**
- **Past Perfect Tense** (The tense remains unchanged)
- **Will** into **Would**
- **Will be** into **Would be**
- **Will have** into **Would have**
- **Will have been** into **Would have been**

Other Verb Form Changes in Reported Speech

- **Can** into **Could**
- **Could** (The verb remains unchanged)
- **Have to** into **Had to**
- **Must** into **Must/Had to**
- **May** into **Might**
- **Might** (The verb remains unchanged)
- **Should** (The verb remains unchanged)

TENSE CHANGES IN REPORTED SPEECH

Direct Speech	Reported Speech
Present Simple She always wears a coat.	Past Simple He said (that) she always wore a coat.
Present Continuous I'm looking for my keys.	Past Continuous She said (that) she was looking for her keys.
Present Perfect She has written three letters for her friend.	Past Perfect He said (that) she had written three letters for her friend.
Past Simple My friend gave me a bar of chocolate.	Past Perfect He said (that) his friend had given him a bar of chocolate.
WILL I will finish my report in two days.	WOULD He said (that) he would finish his report in two days.
CAN I can speak English.	COULD She said (that) she could speak English.
MAY I may invite them to dinner.	MIGHT She said (that) she might invite them to the dinner.
MUST I must go to the bank and get some money.	HAD TO She said (that) she had to go to the bank and get some money.
HAVE TO I have to submit this assignment by 3 pm tomorrow.	HAD TO She said (that) she had to submit this assignment by 3 pm <u>tomorrow</u> .

Changes in Time and Place in Reported Speech

Time and place references often have to change in **Indirect Speech**

- Now → Then
- Today → That day
- Here → There
- This → That
- Tomorrow → The following day/ The next day/ The day after
- Next week → The following week/ The next week/ The week after
- Yesterday → The previous day/ The day before
- Last week → The previous week/ The week before
- Ago → Previously/ Before
- Tonight → That night

TIME AND PLACE IN REPORTED SPEECH




DIRECT SPEECH	REPORTED SPEECH	DIRECT SPEECH	REPORTED SPEECH
Now	Then	"The children are playing outside now ."	He said that the children were playing outside then .
Today	That day	"I've got a piano lesson today ."	She said that she had got a piano lesson that day .
Here	There	"Put the box here ."	He told us to put the box there .
This	That	"I shall be very busy this week."	She said she would be very busy that week.
Tomorrow	The following day/ the next day/ the day after	"I will leave for New York tomorrow ."	She said that she would leave for New York the next day .






Next week	The following week/ the next week/ the week after	"I have an appointment next week."	She said that she had an appointment the following week.
Yesterday	The previous day/ The day before	"Our English teacher quizzed us yesterday ."	They said their English teacher had quizzed them the day before.
Last week	The previous week/ The week before	"We had an awful earthquake last week."	They told us they had had an awful earthquake the previous week.
Ago	Previously/ Before	"The letter came a few days ago ."	He said the letter had come a few days before .

▪ No Change in Verb Tenses in Reported Speech

There is [no change in verb tenses](#) in Indirect Speech when:

- The introductory verb is in the **Present, Present Perfect** or **Future**.
- If the reported sentence deals with a **fact** or **general truth**.
- The reported sentence contains a **time clause**.
- The verb of the sentence is in the **unreal past** (the **second** or the **third conditional**).
- The subjunctive stays unchanged in the **subordinate clause**.
- **Had better, could, would, used to, should, might, ought to** and **mustn't** remain unchanged.
- If the speaker reports **something immediately** or **soon after it was said**.

NO CHANGE IN TENSES IN REPORTED SPEECH		
IN CASE OF	DIRECT SPEECH	REPORTED SPEECH
The introductory verb is in the Present, Present Perfect or Future	He says, "I will come". 	He says that he will come.
Fact or general truth	Copernicus: "The planets revolve around the sun".	Copernicus stated that the planets revolve around the sun.
Time clause(informal) 	She said, "His parents died while he was still at school."	She said that his parents died while he was still at school.
The second or the third conditional	He said, "If I won the lottery, I would travel around the world."	He said that he would travel around the world if he won the lottery. 

 The subjunctive	 The children said, "We wish we didn't have to take exams."	 The children said they wished they didn't have to take exams.
 Report something immediately	A: What did the teacher say?	B: He says we should write our lessons carefully.
"Had better", "Could", "Would", "Used to", "Should", "Might", "Ought to" and "Mustn't" remain unchanged.	He said, "Ann might ring today." 	He said that Ann might ring that day.

▪ Introductory Verbs in Indirect Speech

List of [Introductory Verbs in Reported Speech](#).

- Tell, say, ask
- Verb + that + clause: complain, deny, explain, exclaim, remark, promise, boast, inform somebody, claim, agree, suggest
- Verb + to + infinitive: agree, offer, refuse, demand, threaten, promise, claim
- Verb + indirect object + to + infinitive: advise, allow, beg, command, encourage, forbid, invite, want, instruct, permit, urge, order, remind, warn
- Verb + "ing" form: admit (to), accuse somebody of, apologize for, boast about/ of, complain to somebody of, deny, insist on, suggest
- Verb + how: explain to somebody
- Wonder




INTRODUCTORY VERBS IN REPORTED SPEECH

	VERB	REPORTED SPEECH
VERB + TO + INFINITIVE	Agree	He agreed to cook for me.
	Offer	He offered to carry her baby.
	Refuse	She refused to buy me a car.
	Demand	He demanded to be told the truth.
	Threaten	He threatened to punish me if I didn't behave myself.
	Promise	He promised to marry her when he returned.
	Claim	He claimed to have heard her say that.

VERB + INDIRECT OBJECT + TO + INFINITIVE	Advise	He advised me to take a coat.
	Allow	He allowed me to park over there.
	Beg	She begged me to call the police.
	Command	He commanded them to drop their weapons.
	Encourage	He encouraged me to phone her.
	Forbid	My doctor forbade me to eat sweets.
	Invite	She invited me to go to his house.
	Want	He wanted me to drink a cup of tea.
	Instruct	He instructed me to insert coin.
	Permit	My parents permitted me to travel with my friends.
	Urge	He urged me to finish reading the book.
	Order	She ordered me to get out of bed.

	Remind	She reminded me to take out the garbage.
	Warn	She warned me not to go near the oven.

 INTRODUCTORY VERBS IN REPORTED SPEECH		
	VERB	REPORTED SPEECH
VERB + "ING" FORM	Admit (to)	He admitted (to) stealing/having stolen her money.
	Accuse somebody of	She accused me of breaking the cup.
	Apologize for	He apologized for shouting/having shouted at me.
	Complain to s.one of	He demanded to be told the truth.
	Deny	He denied murdering/having murdered his wife.
	Insist on	She insisted on me/my wearing warm clothes.
	Suggest	She suggested going to the theatre.
	Complain	She complained that I was always late.
	Deny	She denied that she had flown in an aeroplane.

VERB + THAT + CLAUSE	Complain	She complained that I was always late.
	Deny	She denied that she had flown in an aeroplane.
	Explain	He explained that it was an easy recipe to follow.
	Exclaim/remark	She exclaimed/remarked that he was a beautiful baby.
	Promise	She promised that she would call me.
	Boast	He boasted that he was a brilliant dentist.
	Inform somebody	He informed me that I would be called for an interview.
	Claim	He claimed that he knew the answer.
	Agree	He agreed that it was a beautiful hat.
	Suggest	He suggested that I (should) take the other road.

VERB + HOW	Explain to S.one	He explained to me how to make polite conversation.
WONDER	Wonder where/what/why/ how + clause	She wondered how he could reach the top.
		He wondered where Joan was.
	'Wonder + whether + to-inf or clause'	He wondered whether to buy that blender.
		He wondered where he had gone wrong in his calculations.
	'Wonder where/what/how + to-inf or clause'	He wondered what he should wear.
		He wondered how to get to the post office.

▪ Changes of Pronouns in Reported Speech

In indirect speech, you need to be careful with personal pronouns. They need to be changed according to the situation. You need to know the context.

Rules for the Change of Pronouns in Indirect Speech			
Direct Speech	Reported Speech	Example	
		Direct Speech	Reported Speech
I	He/ She	He said, "I like music."	He said that he likes music.
We	They	Mike and Tom: "We play football."	Mike and Tom told me (that) they played football.
You	I, she, he, we, they	John: "Can you see me?"	John asked me if I could see him.
They	They	She said, "they have invited us."	She said that they had invited them.
She	She	He said, "She works in an office."	He said that she worked in an office.
He	He	They said, "He does not have the necessary qualifications."	They said that he did not have the necessary qualifications.
It	It	They said, "It is raining"	They said that it was raining.

▪ Reported Questions in English

When you are changing a question from direct speech into indirect speech, you follow the same kinds of rules as for statements. To report a question, we use verbs such as: inquire, wonder, want to know, ask...

DIRECT VS. INDIRECT QUESTIONS

DIRECT	INDIRECT
WH - QUESTIONS	POSITIVE WORD ORDER
Where is Tondo street?	Can you tell me where Tondo street is?
What time does the supermarket open?	Do you know what time the supermarket opens?
How much do you earn?	Could you tell me how much you earn?
What is he doing?	May I ask what he is doing?
What is your last name?	May I know what your last name is?
YES/NO QUESTIONS	IF/WHETHER + POSITIVE WORD ORDER
Are you living in London?	I'd like to know if you are living in London.
Does John like flying?	Do you know whether John likes flying?
Did she go shopping?	I'm not sure if she went shopping.
Was she a teacher?	Can you tell me whether she was a teacher?
Could you tell me...? Do you know...? I'd like to know... I'd be interested to know... May I ask...?	

▪ Reported Commands and Requests in English

Reported Orders, Commands and Requests are formed using the to-infinitive and not to-infinitive. The reporting verbs for the orders/ commands/ requests are: *order, shout, demand, warn, beg, command, tell, insist, beseech, threaten, implore, ask, propose, forbid...*

When we change from direct to indirect speech, the pronoun and tense changes that are also needed.

Reported Orders/ Commands/Requests

Direct speech: "Open the door!"

Reported speech: He ordered me to open the door.

Direct speech: "Don't answer the phone."

Reported speech: She told me not to answer the phone.

Direct speech: "Don't be back late."

Reported speech: He ordered me not to be back late.

Direct speech: "Come with me."

Reported speech: He told me to go with him.

Direct speech: "Don't lie to me."

Reported speech: He told me not to lie to him.

Direct speech: "I think you should leave now.
It's very late."

Reported speech: She ordered us to leave as it was very late.

Direct speech: "Turn the music down! I'm trying to get to sleep."

Reported speech: He told us to turn the music down as he was trying to get to sleep.