

Reported speech

Nikita said "I like art very much."

Nikita said **he liked** art very much.

We often move the tense of a verb one step back in reported speech because the original words happened before the reported speech:

original words

*'I'm sorry. I can't do that.'*

present tense

reported speech

*She said she couldn't.*

past tense

Original words	Reported speech
Present simple / present continuous: <i>'I'm going to the supermarket to buy food for the party.'</i>	Past simple / past continuous: <i>She said she was going shopping.</i>
Past simple / past continuous: <i>'He went in to work late yesterday.'</i>	Past perfect simple / continuous: <i>She told me he'd gone into work late yesterday.</i>
Present perfect simple / continuous: <i>'I've had a terrible cold, but I'm better now.'</i>	Past perfect simple / continuous: <i>She said she'd had a really bad cold.</i>
Past perfect simple / continuous: <i>'I'd been having loads of trouble with my washing machine so I finally got the plumber in yesterday.'</i>	Past perfect simple / continuous: <i>She told me she'd been having trouble with her washing machine but she's had it fixed now.</i>
Will: <i>'My mother will water my plants whilst I'm away.'</i>	Would: <i>She told me her mother would look after her plants until she gets back.</i>
Be going to + verb: <i>'They're going to have a big celebration.'</i>	Was / were going to + verb: <i>She said they were going to have a big party.</i>

In general, the *present* form in direct speech changes to the *past* form in reported speech:

am/is → was

do/does → did

will → would

are → were

have/has → had

can → could

want/like/know/go etc. → wanted/liked/knew/went etc.

## direct speech → reported speech

here → there    now → then

this/these → that/those

today → that day

yesterday → the day before/  
the previous day

tomorrow → the next/following day

next week/month/year →  
the following week/  
month/year

last week/month/year →  
the previous week/  
month/year

three days ago → three days before/  
earlier