

REPORTED SPEECH



direct speech	reported speech
He said , 'I'm Ted.'	He said (that) he was Ted.
He said to me , 'I'm Ted.'	He said to me (that) he was Ted.
He told me , 'I'm Ted.'	He told me (that) he was Ted. (NOT: He told that he was Ted.)

- **say + to + personal object** – *She **said to us** she was very angry.*
- **tell + personal object** – *She **told us** she was very angry.*

Expressions used with **say**, **tell** and **ask**.

Say	hello, good morning/afternoon, etc, something/ nothing, so, a prayer, a few words, no more, for certain/sure, etc
Tell	the truth, a lie, a story, a secret, a joke, the time, the difference, one from another, somebody one's name, somebody the way, somebody so, someone's fortune, etc
Ask	a question, a favour, the price, after somebody, the time, around, for something/somebody, etc

Reasons for not changing the tense

There are times when we can choose not to change the tense of verbs in reported speech.

- When the situation or feelings/opinions in the original speech are still true:

*My three sisters **have** bright red hair.* → *He told me his three sisters **have** bright red hair.*

*I really **like** your friend.* → *She said she really **likes** you.*

Compare:

*We're **leaving** tomorrow at 6.30.*

→ *They said they're **leaving** tomorrow at 6.30.* (reported on the same day as the original)

→ *They said they **were leaving** the next day at 6.30.* (reported some days after the original)

- When the verb follows the linking words *after* or *because*:

*I **locked** the door after I **finished** cleaning.*

→ *She told him she'd **locked** the door after she **finished** cleaning.*

OR *She told him she'd **locked** the door after she'd **finished** cleaning.*

*I'm annoyed because I **was talking** and you **interrupted** me.*

→ *She said she was annoyed because she **was talking** and I **interrupted** her.*

OR *She said she was annoyed because she **had been talking** and I **had interrupted** her.*

Tense changes in reported speech

ORIGINAL WORDS	REPORTED STATEMENT
Present simple: 'We work for the town council.'	Past simple: → They said they worked for the town council.
Present continuous: 'I'm doing the washing.'	Past continuous: → She said she was doing the washing.
Past simple: 'We decided to leave earlier today.'	Past perfect: → He said they had decided to leave earlier that day.
Past continuous: 'I wasn't telling the truth.'	Past perfect continuous: → She admitted she hadn't been telling the truth.
Present perfect simple: 'My guests haven't arrived yet.'	Past perfect simple: → She said her guests hadn't arrived yet.
Present perfect continuous: 'We've been waiting for ages!'	Past perfect continuous: → They complained (that) they had been waiting for ages.
be going to: 'They're going to stay at home tonight.'	was/were going to: → They said they were going to stay at home that night.
Most modal verbs (e.g. can, will, must): 'I can't say any more.' 'The result will be available later.' 'You must stop writing!'	could, would, had to: → He added that he couldn't say any more. → He said that the result would be available later. → She said we had to/must stop writing.

Other changes in reported speech

We usually change pronouns and time and place words in reported speech:

PRONOUNS AND POSSESSIVES

direct	reported
<i>I</i>	<i>he/she</i>
<i>me</i>	<i>him/her</i>
<i>my</i>	<i>his/her</i>
<i>mine</i>	<i>his/hers</i>
<i>you</i>	<i>I/we</i>
<i>your</i>	<i>my/our</i>
<i>yours</i>	<i>mine/ours</i>
<i>we</i>	<i>they</i>
<i>us</i>	<i>them</i>
<i>our</i>	<i>their</i>
<i>ours</i>	<i>theirs</i>

WORDS FOR TIME AND PLACE

direct	reported
<i>today</i>	<i>that day</i>
<i>tonight</i>	<i>that night</i>
<i>tomorrow</i>	<i>the next day</i> <i>the following day</i>
<i>next (week, month, etc.)</i>	<i>the next/the following (week, month, etc.)</i>
<i>ago</i>	<i>before</i>
<i>yesterday</i>	<i>the day before/</i> <i>the previous day</i>
<i>last (week, month, etc.)</i>	<i>the last/the previous (week, month, etc.)</i>
<i>now</i>	<i>then</i>
<i>here</i>	<i>there</i>
<i>this (place)</i>	<i>that (place)</i>

- ◆ Certain modal verbs change in reported speech as follows:

will/shall	→	would	can	→	could/would be able to (future reference)
may	→	might	must	→	must/had to (obligation)
can	→	could	shall	→	should (asking for advice)

- ◆ *Would, could, might, should, ought, had better* and *mustn't* do not change in reported speech. *Must* does not change in reported speech when it expresses a logical assumption.

direct speech	reported speech
He said, 'I'll have some tea.'	He said (that) he would have some tea.
He said, 'She can type fast.'	He said (that) she could type fast.
He said, 'I can talk to you tomorrow.'	He said (that) he could/would be able to talk to me the next day. (it refers to the future)
He said, 'They may come home.'	He said (that) they might come home.
He said, 'What shall I tell her?'	He asked what he should tell her.
He said, 'You must stay in.'	He said (that) I must/had to stay in.
He said, 'She must be exhausted.'	He said (that) she must be exhausted.

Conditionals in Reported Speech

- ◆ In Type 1 conditionals tenses change in reported speech as follows: the *present simple* becomes *past simple* in the if-clause and *will* becomes *would* in the main clause.

direct speech: 'If I **have** the time, I'll **come round**,' Lisa said.

reported speech: Lisa said (that) if she **had** the time, she **would come** round.

- ◆ Type 2 and Type 3 conditionals do not change in reported speech.

direct speech: 'If she **knew**, she **would help** us,' Tony said.

reported speech: Tony said (that) if she **knew**, she **would help** us.

Reported speech

Commands and requests

- In direct speech, we use the imperative to order someone to do something (command) or ask someone to do something (request).

What changes from direct to reported commands and requests?

- The verbs we use to introduce reported commands are *tell* and *order*. The verbs we use to report a request are *ask* and in some cases *beg* if it is appropriate. We do not use *say*.

Direct speech	Reported speech
The guard said to us, 'Stop!'	The guard ordered us to stop.
The parking attendant said to him, 'Don't park here!'	The parking attendant told him not to park there.
Oliver said to Mary, 'Please close the door'.	Oliver asked Mary to close the door.

The verb form

- When we report a command or request the imperative changes into the infinitive.

Direct speech	Reported speech
The captain said to his crew, 'Start getting ready!'	The captain ordered his crew to start getting ready.
Sandra said to them, 'Don't walk on the carpet with your shoes on!'	Sandra told them not to walk on the carpet with their shoes on.

Reported speech

Questions

What changes from direct to reported questions?

- The reporting verb.

The verbs we use to introduce reported questions are *ask*, *want to know* and *wonder*.

Direct speech	Reported speech
John said to me, 'Are you OK?'	John asked if I was OK.
She said, 'Who is that man?'	She wanted to know who that man was.
He said, 'Will it rain?'	He wondered if it would rain.

- Verb tenses and the structure of the sentence.

Verb tenses change in exactly the same way as in statements.

Reported questions follow the structure of statements.

Direct questions that begin with a verb are introduced with *if* or *whether*.

Direct questions that begin with a question word are introduced with the same question word.

Direct speech	Reported speech
Henry said, 'Are you waiting for me?'	Henry asked if / whether we were waiting for him.
Bea said, 'When was your birthday?'	Bea wanted to know when my birthday was.
Tom asked, 'Where did you find the keys?'	Tom asked where I had found the keys.

- Time expressions, adverbs of place and some verbs that show movement. These change in the same way as in statements.

Introductory Verbs	Direct speech	Reported speech
agree + to infinitive offer promise refuse threaten	<i>"Yes, I'll help you."</i> <i>"Shall I open the door?"</i> <i>"Of course I'll wait for you."</i> <i>"No, I won't go with you."</i> <i>"Be quiet or I'll send you out."</i>	He agreed to help me. He offered to open the door. He promised to wait for me. He refused to go with us. He threatened to send me out if I wasn't quiet.
advise + sb + to infinitive ask beg invite order remind warn	<i>"You should see a lawyer."</i> <i>"Could you help me?"</i> <i>"Please, please help me!"</i> <i>"Will you have dinner with me?"</i> <i>"Leave the cat alone!"</i> <i>"Don't forget to ring Ann."</i> <i>"Don't go near the rocks."</i>	He advised me to see a lawyer. He asked me to help him. He begged me to help him. He invited me to (have) dinner with him. She ordered me to leave the cat alone. She reminded me to ring Ann. He warned me not to go near the rocks.
admit + -ing form accuse sb of apologise for complain to sb of deny suggest	<i>"Yes, I told her the secret."</i> <i>"You broke the vase!"</i> <i>"I'm sorry I arrived so late."</i> <i>"I have toothache."</i> <i>"I didn't take the book."</i> <i>"Let's have a party."</i>	He admitted (to) telling / having told her the secret. He accused me of breaking / having broken the vase. He apologised for arriving / having arrived so late. He complained to me of having toothache. He denied taking / having taken the book. He suggested having a party.
agree + that-clause complain deny explain exclaim / remark promise suggest	<i>"Yes, it's a big house."</i> <i>"You're always lying to me."</i> <i>"I didn't take that book."</i> <i>"It was a difficult film to make."</i> <i>"That's ridiculous."</i> <i>"Of course I'll stay with you."</i> <i>"You'd better see a doctor."</i>	He agreed that it was a big house. He complained that I was always lying to him. He denied that he had taken the book. He explained that it was / had been a difficult film to make. He exclaimed / remarked that it was ridiculous. He promised that he would stay with me. He suggested that I (should) see a doctor.

Reporting verb patterns

There are different ways of reporting speech, with different verbs:

PATTERN		VERBS
1 verb + <i>that</i> clause	no object	<i>add admit announce claim complain insist reply respond say state suggest</i>
	+ object	<i>tell someone warn someone</i>
2 verb + infinitive with <i>to</i>	no object	<i>agree claim offer refuse</i>
	+ object	<i>advise someone ask someone beg someone encourage someone invite someone order someone persuade someone remind someone tell someone warn someone</i>
3 verb + <i>-ing</i> form	no preposition	<i>admit advise consider regret suggest</i>
	+ preposition	<i>admit to apologise for complain about insist on thank someone for</i>