

Reported Speech

Reported Statements

When do we use reported speech? Sometimes someone says a sentence, for example "I'm going to the cinema tonight". Later, maybe we want to tell someone else what the first person said.

Watch my reported speech video:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=120&v=quXqD18XA2Q

Here's how it works:

We use a 'reporting verb' like 'say' or 'tell'. ([Click here for more about using 'say' and 'tell'.](#)) If this verb is in the present tense, it's easy. We just put 'she says' and then the sentence:

- Direct speech: I like ice cream.
- Reported speech: She **says** (that) she **likes** ice cream.

We don't need to change the tense, though probably we do need to change the 'person' from 'I' to 'she', for example. We also may need to change words like 'my' and 'your'.

(As I'm sure you know, often, we can choose if we want to use 'that' or not in English. I've put it in brackets () to show that it's optional. It's exactly the same if you use 'that' or if you don't use 'that'.)

But, if the reporting verb is in the past tense, then usually we change the tenses in the reported speech:

- Direct speech: I like ice cream.
- Reported speech: She **said** (that) she **liked** ice cream.

Tense	Direct Speech	Reported Speech
present simple	I like ice cream	She said (that) she liked ice cream.
present continuous	I am living in London	She said (that) she was living in London.
past simple	I bought a car	She said (that) she had bought a car OR She said (that) she bought a car.
past continuous	I was walking along the street	She said (that) she had been walking along the street.
present perfect	I haven't seen Julie	She said (that) she hadn't seen Julie.
past perfect*	I had taken English lessons before	She said (that) she had taken English lessons before.
will	I'll see you later	She said (that) she would see me later.
would*	I would help, but... □	She said (that) she would help but...
can	I can speak perfect	She said (that) she could speak perfect English.

	English	
could*	I could swim when I was four	She said (that) she could swim when she was four.
shall	I shall come later	She said (that) she would come later.
should*	I should call my mother	She said (that) she should call her mother
might*	I might be late	She said (that) she might be late
must	I must study at the weekend	She said (that) she must study at the weekend OR She said she had to study at the weekend

* doesn't change.

Exercises

1) Choose the correct word or phrase in each sentence.

- The government spokesperson denied/refused that there was a crises.
- Jane said me/told me there was nothing the matter.
- Peter persuaded me/ insisted me to stay to dinner.
- The director of studies advised me/suggested me to spend more time in the library.
- Sheila explained me/warned me not to leave the heater on all night.
- The chairperson mentioned us/reminded us that time was extremely short.
- Bill answered them/replied them with a detailed descriptions of his plans.
- Michael and Sarah announced/ reported that they were going to get married.
- Paul accepted/expected that he had made s mistake and apologized.
- The manager confirmed/reassured that our room had been reserved.

2) Turn the following sentences into reported speech

- "My friend lives in Moscow," said Alec.
- "You have not done your work well," said the teacher to me.
- The poor man said to the rich man: "My horse is wild. It can kill your horse."
- The rich man said to the judge: "This man's horse has killed my horse."
- "This man spoke to me on the road," said the woman.
- "I can't explain this rule to you," said my classmate to me,
- The teacher said to the class: "We shall discuss this subject tomorrow."
- The woman said to her son: "I am glad I am here."
- Mike said: "We have bought these books today."
- She said to me: "Now I can read your translation,"
- Our teacher said: "Thackeray's novels are very interesting."
- She said: "You will read this book in the 9th form."
- Nellie said: "I read 'Jane Eyre' last year."

3) Choose the correct answer

- She said that it was going to be a wonderful party.

- a) "It was going to be a wonderful party".
 - b) "It's going to be a wonderful party".
2. He said the bus might be a little late that day.
- a) "The bus was a little late today".
 - b) "The bus might be a little late today."
3. She told him that he should study harder.
- a) "You should study harder."
 - b) "You should have studied harder."
4. He said that the fire had done a lot of damage to the building.
- a) "The fire had done a lot of damage to the building."
 - b) "The fire has done a lot of damage to the building."
5. He said that Michael was the best student he had ever taught.
- a) "Michael is the best student I have ever taught."
 - b) "Michael was the best student I have ever taught."
6. She told us that the new furniture had been delivered the day before.
- a) "The new furniture had been delivered yesterday."
 - b) "The new furniture was delivered yesterday."
7. They said that the manager would inspect the office the following day.
- a) "The manager will inspect the office the following day."
 - b) "The manager will inspect the office tomorrow"
8. He said that if we hadn't acted so quickly, the accident would have been even worse.
- a) "If you hadn't acted so quickly, would have been even worse."
 - b) "If you haven't acted so quickly, would be even worse."

4) Turn following sentences into direct speech

- 1. He said that while crossing the English Channel they had stayed on deck all the time.
- 2. The woman said she had felt sick while crossing the Channel.
- 3. She said she was feeling bad that day.
- 4. Tom said he would go to see the doctor the next day.
- 5. He told me he was ill. 6. He told me he had fallen ill.
- 7. They told me that Tom had not come to school the day before.
- 8. I told my sister that she might catch cold.
- 9. She told me she had caught cold.
- 10. The old man told the doctor that he had pain in his right side.
- 11. He said he had just been examined by a good doctor.
- 12. He said he would not come to school until Monday.
- 13. The man said he had spent a month at a health-resort.
- 14. He said that his health had greatly improved since then.