

Reported speech

There are many occasions in which we need to describe an event or action that happened, and very often that includes repeating what someone said. In order to describe what people said there are two different types of speech – direct speech and indirect speech (or reported speech).

Direct Speech

When we want to describe what someone said, one option is to use **direct speech**. We use direct speech when we simply repeat what someone says, putting the phrase between speech marks:

Paul came in and said, "I'm really hungry."

Indirect Speech

When we want to report what someone said without speech marks and without necessarily using exactly the same words, we can use reported speech (also called indirect speech). For example:

Direct speech: "We're quite cold in here."

Indirect speech: They say (that) they're cold.

When we report what someone says in the present simple, as in the above sentence, we normally don't change the tense, we simply change the subject. However, when we report things in the past, we usually change the tense by moving it one step back. For example, in the following sentence the present simple becomes the past simple in indirect speech:

Direct speech: "I have a new car."

Indirect speech: He said he had a new car.

Introductory Verbs:

To ask, to say, to tell, to demand, to refuse, to agree, to threaten, to promise, to claim, to beg, to allow, to invite, to instruct.....

DIRECT SPEECH		INDIRECT SPEECH
Present Simple "I go to the cinema on Fridays"		
Present Continuous "I am listening to a true crime podcast"	He	
Present Perfect Simple "I have washed the car"		
Present Perfect Continuous "I have been playing tennis for years"	Said	
Past Simple "I saw her yesterday"		
Past Continuous "I was listening to the teacher"	That	
Past Perfect "I had lived there for many years"		

Future Simple “I will finish that tomorrow”		
Be going to “I’m going to the supermarket”		
Can “I can speak English and I understand German”		
Must “You must finish this for tomorrow”		
May “I may buy a new computer next week”		

Changing Time Expressions

Sometimes it’s necessary to change the time expressions when you report speech, especially when you are speaking about the past and the time reference no longer applies.

For example:

tomorrow/ the following day

yesterday / the day before (yesterday)

this afternoon/ that afternoon.

last week /he previous week.

Reporting Questions

When you report a question you need to change the interrogative form into an affirmative sentence, putting the verb tense one step back, as with normal reported speech.

There are two types of questions that we can report – questions that have a yes/no response, and questions that begin with a question word like ‘what’, ‘where’, ‘who’ etc. When we report a yes/no question, we use ‘if’. For example:

Direct speech: “Do they live here?”

Indirect speech: You asked me **if they lived** here.

For questions starting with question words like ‘what’, ‘where’, ‘when’, ‘who’, etc., we report the question using the question word but change the interrogative form to the affirmative form. For example:

Direct speech: “Where do they live?”

Indirect speech: You asked me **where they lived**.

Direct speech: “When are you leaving?”

Indirect speech: He asked us **when we were leaving**.

Reporting Orders and Requests

When you give someone an order, you use the imperative form, which means using just the verb without a subject. For example:

“**Call** me back later.”

“**Have** a seat.”

“**Don’t do** that!”

To report an order we use ‘tell’ and the infinitive of the verb. For example:

You told me **to call** you back later/ **to have** a seat/ **not to do** that.

(From: <https://www.wallstreetenglish.com/>)

A) Complete the sentence in reported speech:

1. He said, "I like this song."
→ He said
2. "Where is your sister?" she asked me.
→ She asked me
3. "I don't speak Italian," she said.
→ She said
4. "Say hello to Jim," they said.
→ They asked me
5. "The film began at seven o'clock," he said.
→ He said
6. "Don't play on the grass, boys," she said.
→ She told the boys
7. "Where have you spent your money?" she asked him.
→ She asked him
8. "I never make mistakes," he said.
→ He said
9. "Does she know Robert?" he wanted to know.
→ He wanted to know
10. "Don't try this at home," the stuntman told the audience.
→ The stuntman advised the audience
11. Tim: "She works in an office."
→ Tim said
12. Jessica: "I am going to clean the room."
→ Jessica told me (that) she
13. Jeff: "They like the song."
→ Jeff said (that) they
14. Ian and Marvin: "We need new shoes."
→ Ian and Marvin remarked (that) they
15. Kathy: "He can speak Spanish."
→ Kathy told us (that) he
16. Teacher: "Rachel has never been to Philadelphia."
→ The teacher said (that) Rachel
17. Lucy: "The train didn't arrive on time."
→ Lucy said to Gerry (that) the train
18. Emma: "I'm sitting on the chair."
→ Emma said (that) she
19. Nick: "Walter doesn't eat meat."
→ Nick told us (that) Walter

(<https://www.englisch-hilfen.de/> <https://test-english.com/>)

B) Interviewing someone

Be ready to answer the following questions:

1) Talk about your routine

ex: Every week I go the supermarket/ play tennis....

2) What series are you currently watching/ ...book...reading/ ...game...playing/....music...listening to?

3) What did you do during the last summer holidays?

4) What were you doing in December 2020?

5) What beautiful cities/ countries/ monuments have you visited?

6) What sport/ musical instruments...have you been practicing?

7) What will you do after the BUT?

8) How many languages can you speak (and which ones?)

9) What would you do if you won the lottery?