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Understanding Direct and Indirect Speech

Master the art of reporting what people say—whether you're quoting their exact words or paraphrasing their message. This essential grammar skill transforms how you communicate in writing and conversation.



What is Direct Speech?



Direct speech reports the **exact words** spoken by someone, preserved in their original form. It captures the speaker's voice precisely as it was heard.

What is Indirect Speech?

Indirect speech (also called reported speech) conveys **what someone said** without quoting their exact words. The message is paraphrased while maintaining the original meaning.

| **Example:** Mary said that she loved reading books.

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Paraphrasing



No Quotation Marks

The sentence flows naturally without quotes

Paraphrased Form

Words are restructured to fit the reporting context

Key Differences Between Direct and Indirect Speech

Understanding these core distinctions helps you switch seamlessly between reporting styles and choose the right approach for any situation.



Punctuation

Direct speech uses quotation marks; indirect speech does not

Tense Shift

Direct keeps original tense; indirect often shifts tense backward

Pronoun Changes

Pronouns adjust to match the new reporting perspective

Time Expressions

Words like "today" and "tomorrow" change to fit the reporting moment

Example:

Direct: He said, "I am coming tomorrow."

Indirect: He said that he was coming the next day.

Rules for Changing Direct to Indirect Speech

Change Pronouns

Adjust subject and object pronouns accordingly.

Adjust Time/Place

Modify temporal and spatial expressions.

Shift Tense Back

Move verbs one step back in time.

Add Reporting Verb

Introduce a reporting verb and adjust clause.

Follow this systematic approach to accurately convert any direct speech into its indirect form.

1 Tense Changes

Move tense one step back: present → past, past → past perfect

Example: "am" → "was", "will" → "would"

2 Pronoun Adjustments

Shift perspective: I → he/she, you → I/me, we → they

Based on who is reporting

3 Time and Place Words

Update references: today → that day, here → there, tomorrow → the next day

4 Reporting Structure

Use verbs like **said, told, asked** + conjunctions **that, if, whether**

LET'S PLAY WITH VERBS!!

1- CAN YOU HELP THEM TO FIND THE CORRECT VERB IN THE PAST SIMPLE TENSE?

IRREGULAR VERBS

SEE - STUDY - WRITE - ARE

CATCH - DO - SIT - GO - BUY

TELL - EAT - RAN - HAVE -

SLEEP - CAN - SPEAK - IS -

TEACH - WEAR - SWIM -

DRIVE - DRINK - THINK -

BREAK - FIND -

HAD - SLEPT - SWAM - ATE

- THOUGHT - DROVE - TOLD -

RUN - DRANK - FOUND -

- WORE - COULD - WERE -

SAW - WENT - TOUGHT - BOUGHT

- STUDIED - WROTE - SAT -

BROKE - DID - WAS

CAUGHT - SPOKE -



IF YOU LOOK CAREFULLY YOU WILL NOTICE IT IS NOT SO DIFFICULT!!

Ex: STUDY	STUDIED	9-.....
1-.....	10-
2-.....	11-
3-.....	12-
4-.....	13-
5-.....	14-
6-.....	15-
7-.....	16-
8-.....	17-

Examples of Conversion

See the rules in action with these real-world examples that demonstrate common conversion patterns.

Statement Conversion

Direct: She said, "I will call you tonight."

Indirect: She said that she would call me that night.

- Tense: will → would
- Pronoun: you → me
- Time: tonight → that night

Question Conversion

Direct: John asked, "Are you coming?"

Indirect: John asked if I was coming.

- Question word: Use "if" or "whether"
- Tense: are → was
- Word order becomes statement form

Mastering Direct & Indirect Speech



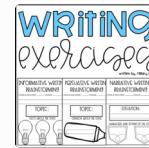
Remember the Core Principle

Direct speech = exact words with quotes; Indirect speech = reported meaning without quotes



Watch for Key Changes

Always check tense shifts, pronoun adjustments, and time/place word transformations



Practice Makes Perfect

Work with real sentences from books, conversations, and news to build confidence and fluency



Unlock Better Communication

Clear use of both forms improves your writing, speaking, and exam performance significantly