

G10 Reported speech

Reported speech (or indirect speech) is used to report what someone has said without quoting them.

- Start the reported speech with a reporting verb:
 - Statements: say (that), tell sb. (that), answer, mention, explain, reply, etc.
 "I'm tired." → She **says** (that) she's tired.
 - Questions: ask, want to know
 "Are you hungry?" → She **asks** me if I'm hungry.
 "Where do you go to school?" → She **wants to know** where I go to school.
 - Commands: tell sb. to + infinitive
 "Leave me alone!" → She **told** me to leave her alone.
- If the reporting verb is in the present, present perfect or future tense, the tense stays the same:

"Spending hours on social media **is** bad for you".
 → Mr Jones **says** spending hours on social media **is** bad for you.
 → Mr Jones **has said** spending hours on social media **is** bad for you.
 → Mr Jones **will say** spending hours on social media **is** bad for you.

- If the reporting verb is in the past tense, the tense of the reported speech changes:

simple present "I text my best friend every day."	→ simple past She said she texted her best friend every day.
present progressive "I am texting my best friend."	→ past progressive She said she was texting her best friend..
simple past "I texted my best friend last night."	→ past perfect She said she had texted her best friend the night before.
past progressive "I was texting my best friend."	→ past perfect progressive She said she had been texting her best friend.
present perfect "I have texted my best friend."	→ past perfect She said she had texted her best friend.
present perfect progressive "I have been texting my best friend."	→ past perfect progressive She said she had been texting her best friend.
past perfect "I had texted my best friend."	→ past perfect She said she had texted her best friend.
past perfect progressive "I had been texting my best friend."	→ past perfect progressive She said she had been texting her best friend.
will-future I will text my best friend every day."	→ conditional I She said she would text her best friend every day.

- Questions follow the same tense changes as statements:
 "How many jobs **have** you **applied** for?" → My friend **asked** me how many jobs I **had** applied for.
- Some adverbs of time also change in reported speech, for example:

now	→	then
yesterday	→	the day before/the previous day
here	→	there
last year	→	the year before/the previous year
today	→	that day
tomorrow	→	the next day

- Statements involving truths and facts do not have to change in reported speech:
 "The novel is by Zadie Smith." → The teacher **said** that the novel **is** by Zadie Smith.