

Advanced uses of reported speech

GRAMMAR

LEVEL
Intermediate

NUMBER
EN_BE_3822G

LANGUAGE
English





Goals

- Can identify and use reported speech verb forms in more advanced sentences.
- Can accurately use reported speech to relay what other people have said.







Preview and Warm-up

- As you may recall, we use **reported speech** to **share what someone else has said**.
- We can use it to **relay direct speech**, but we can also relay **more complex** thoughts, wishes, opinions, questions or actions



Direct speech: I will take notes at the meeting.

Reported speech: She said that she would take notes at the meeting.



Reviewing the necessary verb tenses

- The chart below gives a quick review of the relevant verb tenses you will use in reported speech.

Tense	How it's built	Example
Past continuous	was/were + verb-ing	He was talking on the phone.
Present perfect	have/has + past participle	I have contacted your boss.
Present perfect continuous	have/has + been + verb-ing	She has been working there for 10 years.
Past perfect	had + past participle	We had requested a larger room.
Past perfect continuous	had + been + verb-ing	They had been planning the trip since August.



Building reported speech

- When we are building reported speech, we change pronouns from the **first person** to the **third person**.
- Next, you'll also change the **verb tense**.
 - **The present simple** is changed to the **past simple**; the **past simple** is changed to the **past perfect**, etc.
 - Finally, don't forget a reporting verb like **say, tell, ask** or **suggest**; the reporting verb will vary by context.

- Direct speech: **I have never played polo.**
- The subject is first person (I) and the verb tense is present perfect.



- Reported speech: **She told me she had never played polo.**
- The subject is the third person (she) and the verb tense is **past perfect**.



Reported speech in use

- Note that both **pronouns** and **possessives** change from **first** person to **third person**:
 - ***Our dog** chewed up **my shoes*** becomes ***their dog** chewed up **her shoes***.
- Also note the **verb tense changes** in reported speech.
- The table below shows the formation of reported speech. Can you identify the verb tenses?

Direct speech	Reported speech
We went to an art exhibition yesterday.	They said they had been to an art exhibition the day before yesterday.
I have been going to ballet class for years.	She said she had been going to ballet class for years.
My son took piano lessons.	He said his son had taken piano lessons.
I am leaving my office.	He said he was leaving his office.





When does the verb tense stay the same?



- When you are **describing things** that are **always true** or **still true** at the time you report them, the verb tense may stay the same.
- Additionally, **direct speech** in the **past perfect** stays in the **past perfect** in reported speech.
 - *I **had sent** the invitation months ago, but they just replied today becomes she said that she **had sent** the invitation months ago, but that they had just replied today.*

- **Direct speech:** I live in Surrey and I have four children and two dogs.
- **Reported speech:** Alison told me she lives in Surrey and has four children and two dogs.
- **Why?** At the time the speech is reported, Alison **still lives** in Surrey and **still has four children and two dogs**.



Orders, requests and advice

- **Reported speech** is useful for **relaying the orders, requests, and advice of others**.
- Imagine you are helping your colleague get ready for a big conference. She tells you:
 - *Make 15 copies of the agenda and set the projector up!*

- This is an order—she wants **you** to do these things, so the subject of the direct speech is **you**.
- In reported speech, this would appear as: ***My colleague told me to make 15 copies of the agenda and to set the projector up.***





Reported speech in use

- The table below shows how to form **reported speech** from **requests, orders, and advice**.
- You may transform requests and orders with a **reporting verb + infinitive**:
 - He *asked* me *to turn off* the lights.

Direct speech	Reported speech
Can you send me that report?	He asked me to send him the report.
Will you water our plants while we are gone?	They asked us to water their plants while they were gone.
Take my car to the repair shop, please.	He told me to take his car to the repair shop.
You should get a hair cut!	She suggested that I get a hair cut!



Transform the direct speech into reported speech

1. Please finish your homework!



She asked me to finish my homework.

2. Our house has become too small for our family.



3. We will probably buy a new place soon.



4. We have been looking at 3-bedroom homes outside the city.



5. We are hoping to find something affordable.





Multiple choice

1. Identify the best reported speech that matches up with the following direct speech

■ *I will call you to discuss the details.*

- a. She said she would call me to discuss the details.
- b. She asked to call me.
- c. She said that she had called me to discuss the details.

2. Identify the best reported speech that matches up with the following direct speech

■ *Get me a coffee and muffin at the café.*

- a. I should get him a coffee and a muffin at the café.
- b. He said he had got a coffee and a muffin at the café.
- c. He told me to get him a coffee and a muffin at the café.



Multiple choice

3. Identify the best reported speech that matches up with the following direct speech

■ *My husband and I have been saving for a new car.*

- a. She said that they had been saving for a new car.
- b. She said her husband is saving for a new car.
- c. She told me that she and her husband had saved for a new car.

4. Identify the best reported speech that matches up with the following direct speech

■ *I have always dreamt of living abroad.*

- a. He said he has been dreaming of living abroad.
- b. He told me that he had always dreamt of living abroad.
- c. He told me that he has always dreamt of living abroad.



Reported speech and direct speech

Fill in the boxes with a sentence in either direct speech or reported speech.

Direct Speech	Reported Speech
I have just moved to Beijing from Edinburgh.	_____
_____	He asked me to show him around town.
I applied for all sorts of jobs in China. I was really curious about the culture.	_____
_____	He said he was still looking for an apartment.





New constructions in reported speech

- Now that you have reviewed **reported speech**, let's move on to some more **complex constructions**, using a wider range of reporting verbs.
- The table below highlights some of the **different constructions** you have seen in **reported speech**.

Construction	Direct speech	Reported speech
verb + that + clause	I'll bring you that book later.	She said that she would bring me the book later.
verb + to + infinitive	I will make a reservation for us.	He promised to make a reservation for us.
verb + somebody + to + infinitive	Laura, can you carry my other bag?	He asked her to carry his other bag.
verb + somebody + that	Watch out—the floor is wet.	He warned me that the floor was wet.
verb + gerund	I wish I had not accepted this job!	She regretted accepting this job.



Reporting meaning, not word-for-word translation



- Up to now, we've seen **reported speech** that is mostly **translated directly** from direct speech, using **said** or **told me**.
- You can also use verbs to indicate the **meaning** of the direct speech. Instead of just **saying something**, is someone **claiming, suggesting, advising, refusing, or arguing?**
 - *You should visit the art museum* might be reported as she **suggested** we visit the art museum.

- *It's 250km away, but we can get there in an hour.*
- This statement seems unlikely. We might describe it as a **claim**.
- The other box shows how this could appear in reported speech.

- She **claimed** that we could get there in an hour.
- By using a **reporting** verb like **claim**, we show that the speaker believes their statement is true, even if we are sceptical.



Using a wide range of reporting verbs

- Using different reporting words can make your reported speech more **exciting** and more **precise**.
- Some will depend on context. For example, you would only use **refuse** when relaying information about someone being **unwilling** to do **something**.
 - *I will not drive you to the party* could become *he refused to drive me to the party*.

Reporting verb	Reported speech
Promise	She promised to take me shopping.
Suggest	They suggested that we go to Café Bella.
Advise	My teacher advised me to edit my paper.
Claim	The company claimed to be the best in town.
Refuse	He refused to drive me to the party.





Additional reporting verbs

- This is by no means a complete list of all possible reporting verbs.
- Some more examples are provided in the table below.

Additional reporting verbs	Examples
Remind	Mum reminded us to do our chores.
Deny	Peter denied taking the last biscuit.
Warn	The lifeguard warned us about the sharks.
Confirm	The travel agent confirmed our flights.



We might not know **exactly** what Peter said—probably something like **I didn't take the last biscuit!**—but we have a general understanding and more descriptive language.



Advanced reported speech

- The two sentences below are **reported speech** for the same **direct speech**:
 - *I wish I hadn't taken this job!*
- The first is a more **direct report**. The second **is less wordy** and uses a different reporting verb (regret) to express the meaning of the speech.



He said that he wished he hadn't taken the job.

He regretted taking the job.





Match direct speech to reported speech

Match the direct speech (1-4) with the reported speech (a-d) that fits best.

1. Fine, I'll wear my winter hat.

a. He claimed that they would win easily.

2. I'll take you ice skating tomorrow.

b. She agreed to wear her winter hat.

3. We will easily win this game.

c. He denied cheating on his test.

4. I didn't cheat on my test!

d. He promised to take her ice skating.



An email from your tour guide

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To: friedbergfamily@mail.co.uk

Subject: getting ready for your trip!

Hello Friedbergs!

I am excited to welcome you to Beijing in just a few days. I can guarantee that you will have an amazing trip to Beijing. On the first day, we will start with the Forbidden City and Temple of Heaven Park. You will find these sights absolutely beautiful! Don't forget to bring a good camera. You should take plenty of photos of this city!

Do you have any special requests for the trip? Also, consider taking a side trip to the Great Wall of China. I will organise this, if you like.

Thank you!

Philip Lin

You and your family are taking a trip to Beijing, China and have received this email from your tour guide.

Use reported speech to relay the information to your family.



Receiving tips, warnings, and advice

Your tour guide has offered some suggestions, warnings, and tips. Transform the following into reported speech using new reporting verbs.



Bring sunscreen and lots of water—it is hot!

Try to learn a few phrases in Chinese.

You may feel overwhelmed at first!

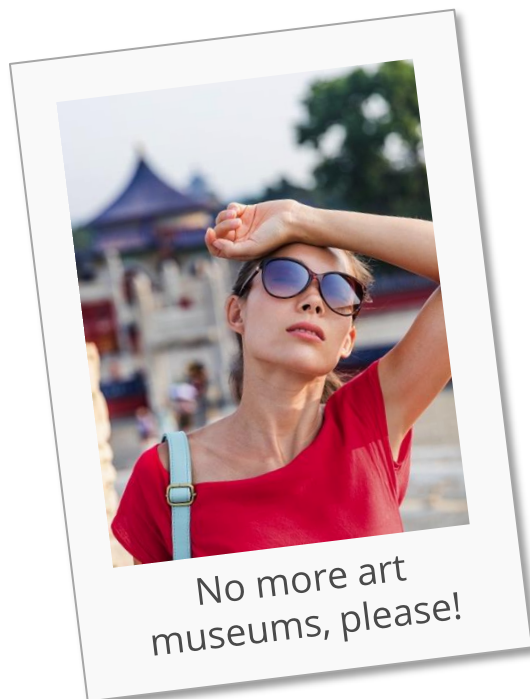
Get lots of sleep on the plane! We will start touring right away.



Agree, argue, or deny?

Below are some quotes from your family's trip.

Use agree, argue, or deny to form sentences in reported speech.
For example: *No more art museums, please!* could become *He argued against visiting another art museum.*





Reporting questions

- Suppose someone asks you a question that you'd like to relay to someone else.
- For example: you work at the airport and someone asks: *is it possible to upgrade to first class for our flight home?*
- You may use the words **whether** or **if** to report on questions that have **yes/no** answers.
- **Whether** tends to be more formal than **if**.

■ *Is it possible to upgrade to first class for our flight home?*

- The other box shows how this question appears in **reported speech**.

■ A customer wants to know **whether** they can upgrade to first class for the flight home.

- To form this reported speech you have a **reporting verb + whether + infinitive clause**



Whether and if in reported questions

- Below you can see more examples of reported questions.
- Note the range of **reporting verbs** that you can use.
- The tenses used in the **reported questions** depend on the context.
 - For example, when relaying a question you have just been asked, it may make more sense to use the **present simple**.

Question	Reported question
Are you British?	He wanted to know if I was British.
Are there still tickets available?	He asked if tickets were still available.
Do you have any children?	She did not know whether I had any children.
May we move to a new table?	They want to know whether they can move tables.





Negatives in reported speech

- Suppose someone says: *don't do that!* How would you report that request?
- Below you will see different structures for using **negatives** in **reported speech**.
 - Note that the word **not** is your **most important indicator** for building negative sentences.

Structure	Direct speech	Reported speech
Not to + infinitive	Please don't move my things.	She asked me not to move her things.
Not + verb-ing	I'm sorry I didn't come to your birthday dinner.	She apologised for not coming to my birthday dinner



Negative sentences in use

- Your neighbours leave you a note that says: *Please don't make so much noise in the evening. Our baby needs to sleep!*
- Below you will see some options for reporting this request.

- Our neighbours told us **not to make** so much noise in the evening.
- Our neighbours scolded us **for not being quiet** in the evening.
- Our neighbours asked us **not to be** noisy at night.





Whether or if?



- Although they are grammatically similar, **whether** is a more **formal** word and is often used to express questions related to **choice or possibility**.



They want to know **whether** they can attend the royal wedding.
They want to know **if** they can watch the royal wedding on television.



Keeping track of time

- Things can get a bit complicated when you are reporting speech that includes a reference to time, the most important thing is to think about **when the direct speech** was said and **when you are reporting it**.
- If you reported the speech below on **Wednesday** it would not make sense to say **tomorrow**, so you'd need to **update your time reference**.





Transform these questions into reported speech using *whether* or *if*.

1. Is it possible to move to a less noisy hotel room?



They asked **whether** it was possible to move to a less noisy hotel room.

2. Is there free wi-fi in the reception?



3. Can you order us a taxi for 5:00 am tomorrow?



4. May we pay with travellers' cheques here?



5. Is there an affordable restaurant nearby?





The care and keeping of pets and plants

August 22

Hello neighbours!

Thanks very much for watching Marmalade, our little cat. She's very easy. You should come over twice a day to play with her, so that she does not get too lonely. Please give her one cup of cat food and fresh water in the morning. Do not feed her too much—she'll eat it all and get sick! She does not like loud noises, so don't play loud music or vacuum.

Please water the plants in the bedroom and living room once a week. Sorry we won't be available by phone, as we'll be in China. If there's a cat emergency, you can call the veterinarian (+44 370 124 554).

Thanks so much for your help!
The Friedberg Family

You have agreed to take care of your neighbours' pet cat and plants while they are on holiday. Read the note they've left and relay the information using reported speech. Pay attention to the negative sentences.



Clarify your neighbours' instructions for your partner. Use the reporting verbs in the green boxes to complete the dialogue.



suggest

The Friedbergs left us a note about how to take care of their cat and plants. The main task is feeding the cat. They _____ twice a day.

advise

Oh no—they _____, or she'll get sick.

remind

Exactly. She hates loud noises, so we should stay quiet. They _____ play loud music.

ask

Yes, we won't be able to call. He _____ if there's an emergency.

I can go over in the morning before work. It will be fun to play with sweet little Marmalade! Should we give her a lot of food, in case she gets hungry?

...

Okay! What else? Is Marmalade scared of anything? Mrs Friedberg once _____ about some of Marmalade's fears.

warn

Great. I saw Mr. Friedberg yesterday. We won't be able to reach them by phone, since they'll be in China. He _____.

apologise



The care and keeping of pets and plants

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To: friedbergfamily@mail.co.uk

Subject: hello from home!

Hi Friedberg Family!

Hello from the old neighbourhood. How is Beijing? Marmalade is doing great. She's such a sweet cat. We have a few questions. **Should we move the plants outside so they get some sun? Can Marmalade play outside, too? Also, would you like us to bring your post inside?** You have received many letters and magazines this week.

One last question. **May we use the pool in your garden?** It's been so hot here, and we'd love to swim.

Best wishes,
Your friendly neighbours

While on holiday, you get an update on your cat and plants from the neighbours back home. Use reported speech to relay the questions that they have asked in their email.



Reflect on the goals

Go back to the second slide of the lesson and check if you have achieved all the goals of the lesson.

yes

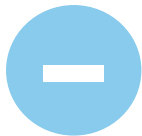
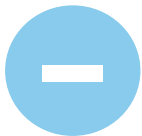
no





Reflect on this lesson

Think about everything you have seen in this lesson.
What were the most difficult activities or words? The easiest?



If you have time, go over
the most difficult slides again



Answer key (1/2)

Exercise p. 11

They said their house had become too small for their family.

They said they would probably buy a new place soon.

He said they had been looking at 3-bedroom homes outside the city.

He told me that they were hoping to find something affordable.

Exercise p. 12-13

1a; 2c; 3a; 4c

Exercise p. 14

He said he had just moved to Beijing from Edinburgh.

Can you show me around town?

He said he had applied for all sorts of jobs in China and that he had been really curious about the culture.

I am still looking for an apartment.

Exercise p. 20

1b; 2d; 3a; 4c

Exercise p. 21

Examples include:

Phillip guaranteed that we would have an amazing trip.

Phillip suggested that we start with the Forbidden City and Temple of Heaven Park.

Phillip advised/reminded us to bring a good camera.

Phillip asked us to think about a side trip to the Great Wall.

He promised to organise this trip, if we would like.

Exercise p. 22

Examples include:

He warned us to bring sunscreen because it would be hot!

He suggested that we learn a few phrases in Chinese.

He warned us that we might feel overwhelmed at first.

He advised us to get lots of sleep on the plane.



Answer key (2/2)

Exercise p. 23

1. He argued against going to bed/he argued in favour of visiting a nightclub instead of going to bed.
 2. He argued that I was reading the map wrong.
 3. She denied ordering the dumplings.
 4. She agreed that the Summer Palace was incredible.
 5. He denied making a reservation there.
 6. He argued against having yet more photographs taken.
 7. He agreed to go on a day trip to the Great Wall of China.
- Exercise p. 30**
2. They asked if/whether there was free wi-fi in the reception.
 3. They want to know whether we could order them a taxi cab for 5:00 am tomorrow.

Exercise p. 32

4. They asked if/whether they could pay with travellers' checks here.
 5. They want to know if there is an affordable restaurant nearby
- Examples of correct examples include:**
1. They suggested that we visit Marmalade twice a day.
 2. They advised us not to feed her too much, or she'll get sick.
 3. Mrs. Friedberg once warned me about Marmalade's fears.
 4. They reminded us not to play loud music.
 5. He apologised for being unavailable.
 6. He asked us to call the vet if there's an emergency.





Transform the direct speech into reported speech

1. Don't drive my car today—I need it.



He asked me not to drive his car, because he needed it.

2. You should finish your homework.



3. I'm sorry I am late!



4. Do not forget to pick up some bread on the way home.



5. I will not tell anyone your secret.



6. I believe I can finish this project in a week.



7. Are you the manager here?



8. Is this store open on Sunday?





Practise using new reporting verbs

Write sentences in reported speech using these advanced reporting verbs.

claim

agree

warn

deny

remind

confirm





Homework answer key

Exercise p. 39

2. He suggested finishing my homework/ he advised me to finish my homework.
3. She apologised for being late.
4. She reminded me to pick up bread on the way home.
5. He promised not to tell anyone my secret.
6. She claimed she could finish the project in a week.
7. He asked if I was the manager/he wanted to know whether I was the manager/he did not know if I was the manager.
8. She asked if the store was open on Sunday/she wanted to know whether the store was open on Sunday.



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