

Reported Speech

Reported Speech - Introduction

Reported Speech is used to report what somebody said.

We are not quoting them but rather paraphrasing.

The tense changes when we use reported speech.

You need to pay attention to pronouns.

Modal verbs are an exception to this rule.

Reported questions need to be looked at closely.

Reported Speech – Examples #1

Reported what someone said:

- “I like coffee” – He said he liked coffee.
- “I go running every day” – She said she went running every day.
- “He has been to Rome” – She said that he had been to Rome.
- “I will be running for President” – He said he would be running for President.

Reported Speech – Examples #2

Pronouns can change:

- “I like coffee” – He said he liked coffee.
- “I go running every day” – She said she went running every day.
- “I like your shirt” – She said that she liked my/her/his shirt.
- “I like your shirt, Jim” – He said he liked Jim’s shirt.
- “Your house is lovely” – She said that our house was lovely.

Reported Speech – Examples #3

Some modal verbs are an exception to the ‘back one tense’ rule:

- “I would like a coffee” – He said he would like a coffee.
- “It might rain tomorrow” – She said that it might rain tomorrow.
- “John could help you” – I said that John could help him.
- “I should see the doctor” – She said she should see the doctor.
- “You ought to lose some weight” – He said I ought to lose some weight.

Reported Speech – Examples #4

Reported questions do not need helper verbs:

- “Where do you live?” – He asked me where I lived.
- “Why do you care?” – She asked him why he cared.
- “Do you own a dog?” – He asked them if they owned a dog.

Reported questions sometimes need extra words (if, whether):

- “Do you speak French?” – She asked me if I spoke French.
- “Did you drive here?” He wanted to know whether I drove here.
- “Is this your first time here?” – They enquired if this was my first time here.