

## Direct Speech / Quoted Speech

Saying exactly what someone has said is called direct speech (sometimes called quoted speech)

Here what a person says appears within quotation marks (“...”) and should be word for word.

*For example:* She said, “Today’s lesson is on presentations.” or

“Today’s lesson is on presentations,” she said.

### Indirect Speech / Reported Speech

Indirect speech (sometimes called reported speech), doesn’t use quotation marks to enclose what the person said and it doesn’t have to be word for word.

When reporting speech the tense usually changes. This is because when we use reported speech, we are usually talking about a time in the past (because obviously the person who spoke originally spoke in the past). The verbs therefore usually have to be in the past too.

*For example:*

#### Direct speech

“I’m going to the cinema”, he said.

#### Indirect speech

He said he was going to the cinema.

#### Tense change

As a rule when you report something someone has said you go back a tense: (the tense on the left changes to the tense on the right):

#### Direct speech

##### Present simple

She said, “It’s cold.”

##### Present continuous

She said, “I’m teaching English online.”

##### Present perfect simple

She said, “I’ve been on the web since 1999.”

##### Present perfect continuous

She said, “I’ve been teaching English for seven years.”

##### Past simple

She said, “I taught online yesterday.”

##### Past continuous

She said, “I was teaching earlier.”

##### Past perfect

She said, “The lesson had already started when he arrived.”

##### Past perfect continuous

She said, “I’d already been teaching for five minutes.”

*Modal verb forms also sometimes change:*

#### Direct speech

##### will

She said, “I’ll teach English online tomorrow.”

##### can

She said, “I can teach English online.”

##### must

She said, “I must have a computer to teach English online.”

##### shall

She said, “What shall we learn today?”

##### may

She said, “May I open a new browser?”

#### Indirect speech

##### Past simple

She said it was cold.

##### Past continuous

She said she was teaching English online.

##### Past perfect simple

She said she had been on the web since 1999.

##### Past perfect continuous

She said she had been teaching English for seven years.

##### Past perfect

She said she had taught online yesterday.

##### Past perfect continuous

She said she had been teaching earlier.

##### Past perfect

NO CHANGE - She said the lesson had already started when he when arrived.

##### Past perfect continuous

NO CHANGE - She said she’d already been teaching for five minutes.

#### Indirect speech

##### would

> She said she would teach English online tomorrow.

##### could

> She said she could teach English online.

##### had to

> She said she had to have a computer to teach English online.

##### should

> She asked what we should learn today.

##### might

> She asked if she might open a new browser.

Note - There is no change to; **could, would, should, might and ought to.**

### Direct speech

“I might go to the cinema”, he said.

You can use the present tense in reported speech if you want to say that something is still true i.e. my name has always been and will always be Leela so:-

### Direct speech

“My name is Leela”, she said.

You can also use the present tense if you are talking about a future event.

### Direct speech (exact quote)

“Next week’s lesson is on reported speech “, she said.

### Indirect speech

He said he might go to the cinema.

### Indirect speech

*She said her name was Leela. or She said her name is Leela*

### Indirect speech (not exact)

*She said next week’s lesson is on reported speech.*

### Time change

If the reported sentence contains an expression of time, you must change it to fit in with the time of reporting.

For example we need to change words like *here* and *yesterday* if they have different meanings at the time and place of reporting.

### Today

“Today’s lesson is on presentations.”

### Indirect speech

She said yesterday’s lesson was on presentations.

### Expressions of time if reported on a different day

this (evening)	>	that (evening)
today	>	yesterday
these (days)	>	those (days)
now	>	then
(a week) ago	>	(a week) before
last weekend	>	the weekend before last / the previous weekend
here	>	there
next (week)	>	the following (week)
tomorrow	>	the next/following day

In addition if you report something that someone said in a different place to where you heard it you must change the place (here) to the place (there).

For example:-

### At work

“How long have you worked here?”

### At home

She asked me how long I’d worked there.

### Pronoun change

In reported speech, the pronoun often changes.

For example:

“I teach English online.”

*She said she teaches English online.*

### Reporting Verbs

*Said, told* and *asked* are the most common verbs used in indirect speech.

We use *asked* to report questions:-

For example: *I asked Prema what time the lesson started.*

We use *told* with an object.

For example: *Sasikala told me she felt tired.*

**Note** - Here *me* is the object.

We usually use *said* without an object.

For example: *Sophy said she was going to teach online.*

If *said* is used with an object we must include *to* ;

For example: *Romy said to me that she’d never been to China.*

**Note** - We usually use *told*.

For example: *Aruna told me that she’d never been to China.*

There are many other verbs we can use apart from *said, told* and *asked*.

These include:-

*accused, admitted, advised, alleged, agreed, apologised, begged, boasted, complained, denied, explained, implied, invited, offered, ordered, promised, replied, suggested and thought.*

Using them properly can make what you say much more interesting and informative.

For example:

*He asked me to come to the party:-*

*He invited me to the party.*

*He begged me to come to the party.*

*He ordered me to come to the party.*

*He advised me to come to the party.*

*He suggested I should come to the party.*

### **Use of 'That' in reported speech**

In reported speech, the word **that** is often used.

*For example: He told me **that** he lived in Germany*

However, *that* is optional.

*For example: He told me he lived in Germany*

**!Note** - That is never used in questions, instead we often use *if*.

*For example: He asked me if I would come to the party.*

### **Exercise**

#### **Rewrite the following in the Reported Speech.**

1. He said, "I have eaten my lunch."
2. She said, "I am doing a degree at the university"
3. The teacher said to the class, "Pay attention."
4. My mother said to me, "Buy some bananas for me."
5. My father said to me, "Don't waste your money."
6. She said to me, "Where is the hospital?."
7. My friend said to me. "Don't be late tomorrow."
8. He asked me, "When will the train arrive?"
9. His teacher said to him, "Try to do it by your self."
10. She asked me, "What are your favorite online games?"

### **Answers**

1. He said that he had eaten his lunch.
2. She said that she was doing a degree at the university.
3. The teacher told the class to pay attention.
4. My mother told/asked me to buy some bananas.
5. My father told me not to waste my money. .
6. She asked me where the hospital is.
7. My friend asked me not to be late tomorrow.
8. He asked me when the train will arrive.
9. His teacher told him to try to do it by himself. .
10. She asked me what my favorite online games are.