**REPORTED or INDIRECT SPEECH**

We use **reported or indirect speech** when  we want to tell someone what a person said:

e.g. He said, “I have lost my umbrella.”

He said (that) he had lost his umbrella.

**HOW WE FORM REPORTED SPEECH**

We use a reporting verb like 'say' or 'tell'. If this verb is in the present tense, then, we just put *'she says'* and then the sentence:

Direct speech: I like ice cream.

Reported speech: She **says** she **likes** ice cream.

We don't need to change the tense, but we do need to change the ‘person' from 'I' to 'she', for example. We also may need to change words like 'my' and 'your'.

**But**, if the reporting verb is in the past tense, then usually we change the **tenses** in the reported speech:

Direct speech: I like ice cream.

Reported speech: She **said** (that) she **liked** ice cream.

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| **Direct Speech** | **Reported Speech** |
| **Simple Present** He said: "I **am** happy" | **Simple Past** He said that he **was** happy |
| **Present Continuous** He said: "I**'m looking** for my keys" | **Past Continuous** He said that he **was looking** for his keys |
| **Simple Past** He said: "I **visited** New York last year" | **Past Perfect Simple** He said that he**had visited** New York the previous year. |
| **Present Perfect** He said: " I**'ve lived** here for a long time " | **Past Perfect** He said that he**had lived** there for a long time |
| **Past Perfect** He said: "They **had finished** the work when I **arrived**" | **Past Perfect** He said that they**had finished** the work when he **had arrived**" |
| **Past Continuous** He said: "I **was playing** football when the accident **occurred**" | **Past Perfect Continuous** He said that **he had been playing** football when the accident **had occurred** |
| **Present Perfect Continuous** He said:"I **have been playing** football for two hours." | **Past Perfect Continuous** He said that **he had been playing** football for two hours |
| **Past Perfect Continuous** He said: "I **had been reading**a newspaper when the light **went off**" | **Past Perfect Continuous** He said that he **had been reading** a newspaper when the light **had gone off** |
| **Future Simple (will+verb)** He said: "I **will open** the door." | **Conditional (would+verb)** He said that**he would open** the door. |
| **Conditional (would+verb)** He said: "I **would buy** Mercedes if I **were** rich" | **Conditional (would+verb)** He said that he**would buy** Mercedes if he **had been** rich" |

**Modal verbs** may change:

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| **Modal** | **Direct speech** | **Reported speech** |
| can | "I **can** do it." | He said he **could** do it. |
| may | "**May** I go out?" | He wanted to know if he **might** go out. |
| must | "She **must** apply for the job." | He said that she **must/had to** apply for the job. |
| will | "They **will** call you." | He told her that they **would** call her. |
| shall | “I **shall** help you.”  “Shall I play the piano?” | He told me that he **would**  help me.  He asked me if he should play the piano. |

The modal verbs ***could, should, would, might, needn't, ought to, used to*** do not normally change.  
e.g. He said "She might be right." – He said that she might be right.

If there is an **expression of time/place** in the sentence, it may be changed, depending on the situation.

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| **Direct Speech** | **Reported Speech** |
| **Time Expressions** | |
| today | that day |
| now | then |
| yesterday | the day before / the previous day |
| … days ago | … days before |
| last week | the week before / the previous week |
| next year | the following year / the year after |
| tomorrow | the next day / the following day / the day after |
| **Place** | |
| here | there |
| **Demonstratives** | |
| this | that |
| these | those |

**GENERAL TRUTHS and SCIENTIFIC FACTS**

To report general truths and scientific facts, we may either leave the verb in the present tense or move it back one tense.

e.g. He said “The Nile River is the longest river in the world.”

He said that the Nile River **is** the longest river in the world.

He said that the Nile River **was** the longest river in the world.

**QUESTIONS IN INDIRECT SPEECH**

When we turn direct questions into indirect speech, the following changes are necessary:

**a.** tenses, pronouns and possessive adjectives, and adverbs of time and place change as in statements.

**b.** the interrogative form of the verb changes to the affirmative form.

**c.** the question mark is omitted in indirect questions.

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| **Types of questions** | **Direct speech** | **Reported speech** |
| **With question word (what, why, where, how...)** | "Why" don’t you speak English?” | He asked me why I didn’t speak English. |
| **Without question word (yes or no questions)** | “Do you speak English?” | He asked me **whether / if** I spoke English. |

**REQUESTS OR COMMANDS IN INDIRECT SPEECH**

We simply use **'ask / tell sb + to + infinitive'** for affirmative requests or commands

and  **'ask / tell sb + not to + infinitive'** for negative ones.

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| **Direct speech** | **Reported speech** |
| “Nancy, do the exercise.“ | He told Nancy to do the exercise. |
| “Nancy, give me your pen, please.” | He asked Nancy to give him her pen. |
| “Children, don’t speak!” | He asked children not to speak. |