

# INDIRECT SPEECH

## THEORY AND EXERCISES

### REPORTED STATEMENTS WITH NO CHANGE OF TENSE

When the main verb of the sentence is present, present perfect, or future there is no change of tense in the reported statement:

He **says** "I am not going" => He says that he is not going

He **will say** "I am not going" => He will say that he is not going

He **has said** "I am not going" => He has said that he is not going

### EXERCISE

1. She says "I'm very tired" => She says .....

2. He has already told me "I've seen this film before" =>

He has already told me .....

3. Simon will say "I am not feeling very well" =>

Simon will say .....

4. The pilot has just announced "The plane will land in half an hour" =>

The pilot has just announced .....

### Reported statements with a change of tense

When the main verb of the sentence is in the past time, the tense in the reported statement is changed:

Simple Present => Simple Past

Present Continuous => Past Continuous

Simple Past => Past Perfect

Past Continuous => Past Perfect Continuous

Present Perfect => Past Perfect

Present Perfect Continuous => Past Perfect Continuous

Past Perfect => Past Perfect

will => would

can => could

may => might

must => had to

this => that

these => those

here => there

come => go  
now => then  
we => they  
today => that day  
tonight => that night  
yesterday => the day before, the previous day  
tomorrow => the next day, the following day, the day after  
last week/month/year => the previous week/month/year,  
the week/month/year before  
next week/month/year => the following week/month/year  
the week/month/year after  
the day after tomorrow => in two days` time  
ago => before/previously

## REPORTED STATEMENTS WITH A CHANGE OF TENSE

1. "My name is Ian" => He said .....
2. "I'm writing a letter" => She said .....
3. "I saw Mary yesterday" => He said .....
4. "I was watching television" => He said .....
5. "The washing machine has broken" => She said .....
6. "I'll see them soon" => He said .....
7. "I must go home to make the dinner" => She said .....
8. "I can drive" => She said .....
9. "I met her about three months ago" => He said .....
10. "We'll see her next summer" => They said .....
11. "My parents are arriving tomorrow" => She said .....
12. "I can see you tomorrow" she said. =>  
She told me .....

## REPORTED QUESTIONS: WH QUESTIONS

Reported questions use the same tense changes and word changes as in reported statements.

“How’s your mother?” => He asked me **how my mother was.**

“What’s your name?” => She wanted to know **what my name was**.

“Why did you take my wallet? => He wanted to know why I had **taken his wallet.**

“Why were you late yesterday?” => He asked her **why** she had been late **the previous day/the day before**.

**NOTE:** ask can be used in reported speech with or without a personal direct object.

Example: She asked me how I was.

She asked how I was.

## EXERCISE

1. "What time does the plane arrive?" we asked. =>  
We asked .....
2. "Why didn't the police report the crime?" the judge asked. =>  
The judge asked .....
3. "Where do you live" the boy asked her. =>  
The boy asked her .....
4. "How old are you?" she asked him. =>  
She asked him .....

## REPORTED QUESTIONS: IF/WHETHER QUESTIONS

**If** or **whether** (the choice is optional) is used for reported questions that do not start with **wh** words.

"Are you angry?" => He asked **if** I was angry.

"Did you see the film?" => She asked **whether** I had seen the film.

## EXERCISE

1. "Does your father work here?" she asked him. =>  
She asked him .....
2. "Are you enjoying yourself?" =>  
She asked me .....
3. "Have you met Danny before?" =>  
He asked me .....
4. "Did you borrow my dictionary?" =>  
He asked her .....

## REPORTED COMMANDS

Reported commands use a personal direct object and the infinitive:

"Stop!" => He told the children **to** stop.

The negative uses **not** before **to +** infinitive

"Don't go!" => He told me **not to** go.

A number of verbs can be used for reported commands e.g. **tell, order, warn, instruct, etc.**

## EXERCISE

1. "Sit down Mary" => He told .....
2. "Be quiet, children" => The librarian told .....
3. "Don't shoot, men!" => The officer ordered .....
4. "Don't go near the sea, children" =>  
The children's mother warned .....

## INTRODUCTORY VERBS

### EXAMPLES

#### 1. Apologize for

"I'm sorry I broke it" => He apologized **for breaking it**.  
He apologized **for having broken it**.

#### 2. Accuse of

"You stole it!" => He accused her **of stealing it**.  
He accused her **of having stolen it**.

#### 3. Deny

"No I didn't touch the vase" => He denied **touching** the vase.  
He denied **having touched** the vase.  
He denied **that he had touched** the vase

#### 4. Admit

"I broke the vase" => He admitted **breaking** the vase.  
He admitted **having broken** the vase.  
He admitted **that he had broken** the vase.

#### 5. Regret

"I wish I hadn't called him" he said. => He regretted **calling** him.  
He regretted **having called** him.  
He regretted **that he had called** him.

"I wish I had had the chance to go to university" he said.=>  
He regretted **not having** had the chance to go to university.  
He regretted **that he had not** had the chance to go to university.

#### 6. Suggest

#### Ways of suggestion:

Let's.....  
Shall we .....?  
Why don't we ....?  
Why not .....? eg Why not go?  
How about .....-ing?  
What about .....-ing?

“Shall we go on foot?” => He suggested **(their) going** on foot.  
He suggested **that they should go** on foot.  
He suggested **that they go** on foot.

“You had better go now” he told her. =>He suggested **her going** then.  
He suggested **that she should go** then.  
He suggested **that she go** then.

**7. Promise to, promise that**

“I will study harder” he said =>He promised **to** study harder.  
“I will help you” he said to her.=> He promised **that** he would help her.

**8. Threaten to**

“Stop shouting or else I’ll go away” he told her. => He threatened to go away if she didn’t stop shouting.

**9. Exclaim**

“I’m so happy” => He **exclaimed that** he was very happy.  
“What a fast car it is!” => He **exclaimed that** it was a fast car.  
“What a beautiful dress!” => She **exclaimed that** it was a beautiful dress.

**10. Offer**

“Shall I send the invitations?” =>  
“Would you like me to send the invitations?” =>  
He offered to send the invitations.

**11. Agree to**

“Yes, I will meet your relatives” =>  
She agreed to meet his relatives.

**12. Agree that + clause**

“Yes, it is strange” =>  
He agreed that it was strange.

**13. Refuse to**

“I won’t give you the book” =>  
She refused to give him the book.

**14. Ask**

“Could you lend me some money, please?” =>  
He asked me to lend him some money.

**15. Advise**

**Ways of advice:**

If I were you I would .....

You had better .....

You should .....

“You`d better stay in bed” =>

He advised me to stay in bed.

**16. Warn**

“Don`t touch it!” =>

He warned her not to touch it.

**17. Remind**

“Don`t forget to telephone her” =>

He reminded me to telephone her.

**18. Beg**

“Please, please, don`t break it” =>

He begged her not to break it.

**19. Invite**

“Would you like to have dinner with me? =>

He invited her to have dinner with him.

**20. Order**

“Stop talking!” =>

He ordered me to stop talking.

**NOTE :** suggest, require, insist, demand etc + **subjunctive** (**should** is omitted and the infinitive is left alone)

eg I suggest that Mr Brown should resign as soon as possible.

I suggest that Mr Brown resign as soon as possible.