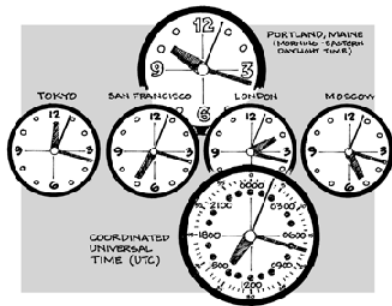


# REPORTED SPEECH



**We use reported speech when we are saying what other people asked or wanted to know. We do not use do or question marks in indirect questions.**



"What time is it?" =  
He asked me what time it was.

"When will you be arriving?" =  
He wanted to know when we would be arriving.

"Why are you studying English?" =  
She asked me why I was studying English.

"Why hasn't he come?" =  
She wondered why he hadn't come.

"What were you doing?" =  
They questioned him about what he had been doing.

# Put in order.

1.

was. me  
time what it  
He asked

2.

he She  
wondered was.  
where

3.

had wanted  
to  
been. know  
where I He

4.

I asked  
me where  
She lived.

5.

wanted  
know  
his was. to I  
name what

6.

I They  
asked  
what doing. me about was

We use the same structure when we report answers.

# 147 Oak Street

"147 Oak Street." =  
I told him what my address was.



"Look at this dress and bag." =  
She showed me what she had bought.



"Put the paper here and press this button." =  
He demonstrated how the scanner worked.

"I didn't have time to do it." =  
She explained why she hadn't done it.

## Mix and match

Where are you?

Where were you?

Where do you live?

Where is he?

Where will you live?

Where did you live?

Do you live here?

Where are you going?

Where will you be staying?

She wanted to know where I was.

She wanted to know where I would live.

She asked me where I had been.

She asked me where I lived.

She asked me if I lived here.

She wanted to know where I was going.

She wondered where he was.

She asked me where I had lived.

She asked me where I would be staying.

**Yes/no questions are reported with if or whether.**



Do you want a ride? =  
Mike asked me if I wanted a ride.



"Do you play football?" =  
Peter asked me whether (if) I played football.



Are you coming? =  
They wanted to know if I was coming.

Will you be here later? =  
She asked me whether I would be here later.

## Complete the sentences.

Do you want to come? = He asked me  .

Is Isabel coming? = She wanted to know  .

Can you do it? = He asked me  .

Did you get there on time? = Sue asked me  .

Have you done it yet? = He wanted to know  .

Will you do it? = Paul asked me  .

Do I have to go? = Jamie asked me  .

Were you sleeping? = He wanted to know  .

**In Reported speech there is no question anymore, the sentence becomes a statement.**

**That's why the word order is: subject – verb**

Question without question words (yes/no questions):

Peter: "Do you play football?" - Peter asked me whether (if) I played football.

Question with question words:

Peter: "When do you play football?" - Peter asked me when I played football.

**Complete the sentences in reported speech.**

- "Where is my umbrella?" she asked.  
→ She asked \_\_\_\_\_.
- "How are you?" Martin asked us.  
→ Martin asked us \_\_\_\_\_.
- He asked, "Do I have to do it?"  
→ He asked \_\_\_\_\_.
- "Where have you been?" the mother asked her daughter.  
→ The mother asked her daughter \_\_\_\_\_.
- "Which dress do you like best?" she asked her boyfriend.  
→ She asked her boyfriend \_\_\_\_\_.
- 6. "What are they doing?" she asked.  
→ She wanted to know \_\_\_\_\_.
- 7. "Are you going to the cinema?" he asked me.  
→ He wanted to know \_\_\_\_\_.
- 8. The teacher asked, "Who speaks English?"  
→ The teacher wanted to know \_\_\_\_\_.
- 9. "How do you know that?" she asked me.  
→ She asked me \_\_\_\_\_.
- 10. "Has Caron talked to Kevin?" my friend asked me.  
→ My friend asked me \_\_\_\_\_.



1. if I wanted to come.
2. if Isabel was coming.
3. if I could do it.
4. if I had got there on time.
5. if I had done it yet.
6. if I would do it.
7. if he had to go.
8. if I had been sleeping.

1. "Where is my umbrella?" she asked.  
→ She asked where her umbrella was. \_\_
2. "How are you?" Martin asked us.  
→ Martin asked us how we were. \_\_
3. He asked, "Do I have to do it?"  
→ He asked if he had to do it.
4. "Where have you been?" the mother asked her daughter.  
→ The mother asked her daughter where she had been.
5. "Which dress do you like best?" she asked her boyfriend.  
→ She asked her boyfriend which dress he liked best.

6. "What are they doing?" she asked.  
→ She wanted to know what they were doing.
7. "Are you going to the cinema?" he asked me.  
→ He wanted to know if I was going to the cinema.
8. The teacher asked, "Who speaks English?"  
→ The teacher wanted to know who spoke English.
9. "How do you know that?" she asked me.  
→ She asked me how I knew that.
10. "Has Caron talked to Kevin?" my friend asked me.  
→ My friend asked me if Caron had talked to Kevin. \_\_

## What other people say

**We use reported speech when we are saying what other people say, think or believe.**

- He says he wants it.
- We think you are right.
- I believe he loves her.
- Yesterday you said you didn't like it but now you do!
- She told me he had asked her to marry him.
- I told you she was ill.
- We thought he was in Australia.

**When we are reporting things in the present, future or present perfect we don't change the tense.**

- He thinks he loves her.
- I'll tell her you are coming.
- He has said he'll do it.

## Exercise

### Put in order



1.

you didn't  
Yesterday  
like  
it! said  
you

2.

She told he  
to me had asked  
him. her marry

3.

thought We Australia.  
was in he

4.

He wants it.  
says he

5.

he believe  
I loves her.

6.

are right. We  
you think

7.

she I was  
ill. told you

# What someone has said in the past

When we tell people what someone has said in the past, we generally make the tense 'more in the past'.

- You look very nice. = I told him he looked very nice.
- He's working in Siberia now. = She told me he was working in Siberia now.
- Polly has bought a new car. = She said Polly had bought a new car.
- Jo can't come for the weekend. = She said Jo couldn't come for the weekend.
- Paul called and left a message. = He told me Paul had called and had left me a message.
- I'll give you a hand. = He said he would give me a hand.

## Exercise



Match the questions and answers

He's very nice.

I love her.

I'll do it when I can.

I'm coming tomorrow.

Where does she work?

Yellow is the best color.

You're a very good driver.

I'll give it to you next week.

I think it is a good idea.

He thinks I'm a very good driver.

He believes yellow is the best color.

He says he's coming tomorrow.

I wonder where she works.

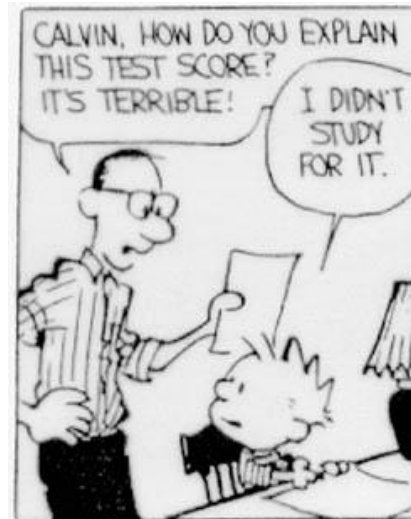
He has said he'll do it when he can.

She thinks he's very nice.

He says he loves her.

She has told me she will give it to me next week.

I'll tell her you think so.



His father asked him how he explained that test score.

However, when we are reporting something that was said in the past but is still true, it is not obligatory to make the tense 'more in the past'. The choice is up to the speaker. For example:

"The train doesn't stop here."

- He said the train doesn't stop here.
- He said the train didn't stop here.

"I like Sarah."

- She said she likes Sarah.
- She said she liked Sarah.

## Exercise

Match the questions and answers

- He is nice. = She said he \_\_\_\_\_ nice.
- He isn't nice. = She said he \_\_\_\_\_ nice.
- He was nice. = She said he \_\_\_\_\_ nice.
- He wasn't nice. = She said he \_\_\_\_\_ nice.
- He is being nice. = She said he \_\_\_\_\_ nice.
- He isn't going to be nice. = She said he \_\_\_\_\_ nice.
- He will be nice. = She said he \_\_\_\_\_ nice.
- He won't be nice. = She said he \_\_\_\_\_ nice.
- He can be nice. = She said he \_\_\_\_\_ nice.
- He can't be nice. = She said he \_\_\_\_\_ nice.

wasn't

was

would be

could be

was being

had been

wasn't going to be

wouldn't be

couldn't be

hadn't been



"I know I said I was hungry, but I'm NOT that hungry."

## Reporting what someone else said

**We have to change the pronoun if we are reporting what someone else said. Compare these two sentences. In each case the person actually said "I don't want to go."**

- I said I didn't want to go.
- Bill said he didn't want to go.



He asked her if she was bored.  
She wondered if he would propose.

He asked her when she wanted to leave.  
She wondered where they would go

**We have to change words referring to 'here and now' if we are reporting what was said in a different place or time.**

**Compare these two sentences. In each case the person actually said "I'll be there at ten tomorrow."**

- (If it is later the same day) He said he would be there at ten tomorrow.
- (If it is the next day) He said he would be there at ten today.

Now compare these two sentences.

- (If we are in a different place) He said he would be there tomorrow at ten.
- (If we are in the place he is coming to) He said he would be here at ten tomorrow.

## Exercise



### Complete the sentences

I can do it. = She said she  do it.

Harry will be here in a minute. = She said Harry  here in a minute.

They are very kind people. = She said they  very kind people.

He is leaving now. = She said he  now.

He isn't here at the moment. = She said he  there at the moment.

He won't be here on time. = She said he  here on time.

She wasn't very helpful. = She said she  very helpful.

We didn't leave until ten. = They said they  until ten.

They are going to buy it. = She said they  to buy it.

They spent a lot of money on it. = She said they  a lot of money on it.

## Other verbs we can use

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

**examples:**

*boasted, invited, accused, complained, apologized, begged, advised, denied, offered, ordered, suggested..."*

### Exercise

Convert sentences from direct to reported speech.

"Can they play the piano?" she asked.

"It's raining," she said.

He said to her, "I love you."

"Phone your granny," she told him.

"I first met my wife in Seville," he told us.



"Don't talk to strangers, Michael," said his mother.

"We've lived here for three years," he said.

"Don't listen to a word he says," she told me.

"Has Sarah ever been to Korea?" he asked.

"Don't be late," she warned him.



**"I don't know how to cook"**

**"I was just telling Alice I didn't  
know how to cook"**

# Reported commands

## Reported commands

If you put a command into Reported speech there are some steps which are the same like in statements: (changing of the person, backshift of tenses, changing of expressions of time).

The form is mostly: form of to tell + to + infinitive.

### Affirmative commands

Father: "Do your homework."  
Father told me to do my homework.

### Negative commands

Teacher: "Don't talk to your neighbor."  
The teacher told me not to talk to my neighbor.

## Exercise

Turn these affirmative commands to reported commands:

1. Mike: "Pass me the ball!" \_\_\_\_\_
2. Lenny: "Submit the report tomorrow." \_\_\_\_\_
3. Kyle: "Go to the grocery and buy me soda" \_\_\_\_\_

Turn these negative commands to reported commands:

1. Janice: "Don't sleep late tonight" \_\_\_\_\_
2. Jack: "Don't open the can of beans" \_\_\_\_\_
3. Paul: "Don't be sick on Sunday" \_\_\_\_\_

## Reported Questions

### Reported questions

If you put a question into Reported speech there are some steps which are the same like in statements: (changing of the person, backshift of tenses, changing of expressions of time).

*In Reported speech there is no question anymore, the sentence becomes a statement.*

*That's why the word order is: subject - verb*

**Question without question words (yes/no questions):**

**Peter: "Do you play football?" - Peter asked me whether (if) I played football.**

**Question with question words:**

**Peter: "When do you play football?" - Peter asked me when I played football.**

## Exercise

Convert these reported questions

1. Alvin: "Do you like playing soccer?" \_\_\_\_\_
2. Tanya: "When will you return my book?" \_\_\_\_\_
3. Steven: "How cold is it in London?" \_\_\_\_\_
4. Lea: "Have you seen the new movie?" \_\_\_\_\_
5. Fred: "Are you hungry?" \_\_\_\_\_

# Reported Statements

1) If the sentence starts in the present, there is no backshift of tenses in Reported speech.

Example: Susan: "I work in an office." Susan says that she works in an office.

2) If the sentence starts in the past, there is often backshift of tenses in Reported speech.

Example: Susan: "I work in an office." Susan said that she worked in an office.

Backshift of tenses	
from	to
Simple Present	Simple Past
Simple Past	Past Perfect
Present Perfect	
Past Perfect	
will	would
Progressive forms	
am/are/is	was/were
was/were	had been
has been	
had been	

## Exercise

**She said, "I am reading."**

→ **She said that** \_\_\_\_\_

**They said, "We are busy."**

→ **They said that** \_\_\_\_\_

**He said, "I know a better restaurant."**

→ **He said that** \_\_\_\_\_

**She said, "I woke up early."**

→ **She said that** \_\_\_\_\_

**He said, "I will ring her."**

→ **He said that** \_\_\_\_\_

**They said, "We have just arrived."**

→ **They said that** \_\_\_\_\_

**He said, "I will clean the car."**

→ **He said that** \_\_\_\_\_

**She said, "I did not say that."**

→ **She said that** \_\_\_\_\_

Backshift of tenses	
from	to
Peter: "I <b>work</b> in the garden."	Peter said that he <b>worked</b> in the garden.
Peter: "I <b>worked</b> in the garden."	Peter said that he <b>had worked</b> in the garden.
Peter: "I <b>have worked</b> in the garden."	
Peter: "I <b>had worked</b> in the garden."	
Peter: "I <b>will work</b> in the garden."	Peter said that he <b>would work</b> in the garden.
Peter: "I <b>can work</b> in the garden."	Peter said that he <b>could work</b> in the garden.
Peter: "I <b>may work</b> in the garden."	Peter said that he <b>might work</b> in the garden.
Peter: "I <b>would work</b> in the garden." ( <b>could, might, should, ought to</b> )	Peter said that he <b>would work</b> in the garden. ( <b>could, might, should, ought to</b> )
Progressive forms	
Peter: "I'm <b>working</b> in the garden."	Peter said that he <b>was working</b> in the garden.
Peter: "I <b>was working</b> in the garden."	Peter said that he <b>had been working</b> in the garden.
Peter: "I <b>have been working</b> in the garden."	
Peter: "I <b>had been working</b> in the garden."	



# Expression of Time

If the sentence contains an expression of time, you must change it as well.

*Peter: "I worked in the garden yesterday."*

*Peter said that he had worked in the garden the day before.*

Shifting of expressions of time

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

**In some cases the backshift of tenses is not necessary, e.g. when statements are still true.**

*John: "My brother is at Leipzig university."*

John said that his brother was at Leipzig university. or  
John said that his brother is at Leipzig university.

or

*Mandy: "The sun rises in the East."*

Mandy said that the sun rose in the East. or  
Mandy said that the sun rises in the East.

# Exercise