REPORTED SPEECH

DIRECT AND INDIRECT (OR REPORTED) SPEECH. INTRODUCTION

There are two ways of relating what a person has said: direct and indirect.
In direct speech we repeat the original speaker's exact words:

He said, "I have lost my umbrella."

Remarks thus repeated are placed between inverted commas, and a comma is placed immediately before the remark. Direct speech is found in conversations in books, in plays and in quotations.
In indirect speech we give the exact meaning of a remark or a speech, without necessarily using the speaker's exact words:

He said (that) he had lost his umbrella.

There is no comma after **say** in indirect speech. **that** can usually be omitted after **say** and **tell** + object. But it should be kept after other verbs: **complain, explain, object, point out, protest** etc. Indirect speech is normally used when conversation is reported verbally, though direct speech is sometimes here to give a more dramatic effect.
When we turn direct speech into indirect, some changes are usually necessary.

PRONOUNS AND ADJECTIVES: CHANGES NECESSARY

A. First and second person pronouns and possessive adjectives normally change to the third person except when the speaker is reporting his own words. (I = he, she; me = him, her; my = his, her; mine = his, hers; we = they...)

She said, "he's my son". ➔ She said that he was her son.
"I'm ill", she said. ➔ She said that she was ill.

B. **THIS / THESE**

This used in time expressions usually becomes **that**.

She said, "She's coming this week". ➔ She said that she was coming that week.

This and **that** used as adjectives usually change to **the**.

He said, "I bought this pearl/these pearls for my mother". ➔
He said that he had bought the pearl/the pearls for his mother.

This, these used as pronouns can become **it, they/them**.

He came back with two knives and said, "I found these beside the king's bed". ➔ He said he had found them beside the king's bed.
He said, "We will discuss this tomorrow". ➔ He said that they would discuss it (the matter) the next day.

EXPRESSIONS OF TIME AND PLACE IN INDIRECT SPEECH

A. Adverbs and adverbial phrases of time change as follows:

DIRECT SPEECH	INDIRECT SPEECH
today	*that day*
yesterday	*the day before*
the day before yesterday	*two days before*
tomorrow	*the next day/the following day*
the day after tomorrow	*in two day's time*
next week/year etc.	*the following week/year etc.*
last week/year etc.	*the previous week/year etc.*
a year etc. ago	*a year before/the previous year*

"I saw her the day before yesterday", he said. ➔ He said he'd seen her two days before.
"I'll do it tomorrow", he promised. ➔ He promised that he would do it the next day.
She said, "My father died a year ago". ➔ She said that her father had died a year before/the previous year.

B. But if the speech is made and reported on the same day these time changes are not necessary:
At breakfast this morning he said, "I'll be very busy today". ➔ At breakfast this morning he said that he would be very busy today.

C. **here** can become **there** but only when it is clear what place is meant:
At the station he said, "I'll be here again tomorrow". ➔ He said that he'd be there again the next day.

Usually **here** has to be replaced by some phrase:
She said, "You can sit here, Tom". ➔ She told Tom that he could sit beside her.

STATEMENTS IN INDIRECT SPEECH: TENSE CHANGES NECESSARY

A. Indirect speech can be introduced by a verb in a present tense: *He says that* ... This is usual when we are:
   a. reporting a conversation that is still going on
   b. reading a letter and reporting what it says
   c. reading instructions and reporting them
   d. reporting a statement that someone makes very often, e.g. *Tom says that he'll never get married.*

When the introductory verb is in a present, present perfect or future tense we can report the direct speech without any change of tense:
PAUL (phoning from the station): *I'm trying to get a taxi.*
ANN (to Mary, who is standing beside her): *Paul says he is trying to get a taxi.*

B. But indirect speech is usually introduced by a verb in the past tense. Verbs in the direct speech have then to be changed into a corresponding past tense. The changes are shown in the following table.

DIRECT SPEECH	INDIRECT SPEECH
Simple Present *"I never eat meat", he explained.*	***Simple Past*** *= He explained (that) he never ate meat.*
Present Continuous *"I'm waiting for Ann", he said.*	***Past Continuous*** *= He said (that) he was waiting for Ann.*
Present Perfect *"I have found a flat", he said.*	***Past Perfect*** *= He said (that) he had found a flat.*
Present Perfect Continuous *He said, "I've been waiting for ages".*	***Past Perfect Continuous*** *= He said (that) he had been waiting for ages.*
Simple Past *"I took it home with me", she said.*	***Past Perfect*** *= She said (that) he had taken it home with her.*
Future *He said, "I will/shall be in Paris on Monday".*	***Conditional*** *= He said (that) he would be in Paris on Monday.*
Future Continuous *"I will/shall be using the car myself on the 24h", she said.*	***Conditional Continuous*** *= She said (that) she'd been using the car herself on the 24th.*
Conditional *I said, "I would like to see it".*	***Conditional*** *= I said (that) I would like to see it.*

All those changes represent the distancing effect of the reported speech. Common sense, together with the time aspect from the speaker's point of view, are more important than the rules when making the usual changes.

QUESTIONS IN INDIRECT SPEECH

Direct question: *He said, "Where is she going?"*
Indirect question: *He asked where she was going.*

A. 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.

B. If the introductory verb is **say**, it must be changed to a verb of inquiry, e.g. **ask, wonder, want to know** etc.
   He said, "Where is the station?" ➔ He asked where the station was.

C. **ask** can be followed by the person addressed (indirect object):
   He asked, "What have you got in your bag?" ➔ He asked (me) what I had got in my bag.

   But **wonder** and **want to know** cannot take an indirect object, so if we wish to report a question where the person addressed is mentioned, we must use **ask**.
   He said, "Mary, when is the next train?" ➔ He asked Mary when the next train was.

D. If the direct question begins with a question word (when, where, who, how, why etc.) the question word is repeated in the indirect question:
   He said, "Why didn't you put on the brake?" ➔ He asked (her) why she hadn't put on the brake.
   She said, "What do you want?" ➔ She asked (them) what they wanted.

E. If there is no question word, **if** or **whether** must be used:
   "Is anyone there?" he asked ➔ He asked if/whether anyone was there.

COMMANDS, REQUESTS, ADVICE IN INDIRECT SPEECH

Direct command: *He said, "Lie down, Tom".*
Indirect command: *He told Tom to lie down.*

Indirect commands, requests, advice are usually expressed by a verb of command/request/advice + object + infinitive.

A. The following verbs can be used: **advise, ask, beg, command, order, remind, tell, warn** etc.
   He said, "Get your coat, Tom!" ➔ He told Tom to get his coat.

B. Negative commands, requests etc. are usually reported by **not** + infinitive:
   "Don't swim out too far, boys", I said ➔ I warned/told the boys not to swim out too far.

EXCLAMATIONS IN INDIRECT SPEECH

Exclamations usually become statements in indirect speech. The exclamation mark disappears.

a. Exclamations beginning **What (a) ...** or **How ...** can be reported by:
   - **exclaim/say that**:
     He said, "What a dreadful idea!" or "How dreadful!" ➔ He exclaimed that it was a dreadful idea/was dreadful.
   - **give an exclamation of** delight/disgust/horror/relief/surprise etc.
   - if the exclamation is followed by an action we can use the construction **with an exclamation of** delight/disgust etc. + **he/she** etc. + verb.

b. Other types of exclamation such as **Good! Marvellous! Splendid! Heavens! Oh! Ugh!** etc. can be reported as in (b) or (c) above:

"Good!" he exclaimed. ➔ He gave an exclamation of pleasure/satisfaction.
"Ugh!" she exclaimed, and turned the programme off. ➔ With an exclamation of disgust she turned the programme off.

c. Note also:

He said, "Thank you!" ➔ He thanked me.
He said, "Good luck!" ➔ He wished me luck.
He said, "Happy Christmas!" ➔ He wished me a happy Christmas.
He said, "Congratulations!" ➔ He congratulated me.
He said, "Liar!" ➔ He called me a liar.
He said, "Damn!" etc. *➔ He swore.*
The notice said: WELCOME TO WALES! ➔ The notice welcomed visitors to Wales.

YES AND NO IN INDIRECT SPEECH

yes and **no** are expressed in indirect speech by subject + appropriate auxiliary verb.

He said, "Can you swim?" and I said "No" ➔ He asked (me) if I could swim and I said I couldn't.
He said, "Will you have time to do it?" and I said "Yes" ➔ He asked if I would have time to do it and I said that I would.

OFFERS AND SUGGESTIONS IN INDIRECT SPEECH

A. **OFFERS**

"Shall I bring you some tea?" could be reported *He offered to bring me some tea.*

B. **SUGGESTIONS**

"Shall we meet at the theatre? could be reported *He suggested meeting at the theatre.*

INDIRECT SPEECH: MIXED TYPES

Direct speech may consist of statement + question, question + command, command + statement, or all three together. Normally each requires its own introductory verb.

"I don't know the way. Do you?" he asked. ➔ He said he didn't know the way and asked her if she did/if she knew it.
He said, "Someone is coming. Get behind the screen." ➔ He said that someone was coming and told me to get behind the screen.

REPORTED SPEECH: OTHER POINTS

A. **MUST:** after a past reporting verb, **must** does not usually change:

He said, "It must be pretty late, I really must go". ➔ He said that it must be pretty late and he really must go.

had to is also possible in reported speech, but this is really the past of **have to**, not must.

He said, "I have to go. I have an appointment in half an hour" ➔ He said that he had to go because he had an appointment in half an hour.

B. **MODAL VERBS**: Past modal verbs (could, might, ought to, should, used to, etc.) do not normally change in reported speech.

He said, "I might come". ➔ He said that he might come.
He said, "I would help him if I could". ➔ He said that he would help him if he could.
He said, "You needn't wait". ➔ He said that I needn't wait.

C. **CONDITIONALS**: Conditional sentences type two remain unchanged.

He said, "If my children were older I would emigrate". ➔ He said that if his children were older he would emigrate.

SAY AND TELL AS INTRODUCTORY VERBS

A. **say** and **tell** with direct speech.

1. **say** can introduce a statement or follow it.

Tom said, "I've just heard the news". or "I've just heard the news",Tom said.

Inversion of **say** and noun subject is possible when **say** follows the statement.

"I've just heard the news", said Tom.

say + to + person addressed is possible, but this phrase must follow the direct statement; it cannot introduce it.

"I'm leaving at once", Tom said to me.

Inversion is not possible here.

2. **tell** requires the person addressed.

Tell me. He told us. I'll tell Tom.

Except with **tell lies/stories/the truth/the time**, when the person addressed need not to be mentioned.

He told (me) lies. I'll tell (you) a story.

Tell used with direct speech must be placed after the direct statement:

"I'm leaving at once", Tom told me.

Inversion is not possible with **tell**.

B. **say** and **tell** with indirect speech

Indirect statements are normally introduced by **say**, or **tell** + object. **Say** + **to** + object is possible but less usual than **tell** + object.

He said he'd just heard the news.
He told me that he'd just heard the news.

Note also **tell ... how/about**:

He told us how he had crossed the mountains.
He told us about crossing the mountains.
He told us about his journeys.

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EXERCISES

STATEMENTS

1. These people are saying these things. Report them, using *says that.*

a. Paul: "Atlanta is a wonderful city." _____
b. Ruth: "I go jogging every morning." _____
c. Anna: "Jenny isn't studying for her exams." _____
d. Andrew: "I used to be very fat." _____
e. e.- Jim: "I can't swim." _____

2. People made these statements. Report them, using *said.*

a. "Mary works in a bank", Jane said. _____
b. "I'm staying with some friends", Jim said. _____
c. "I've never been to Russia", Mike said. _____
d. "Tom can't use a computer", Ella said. _____
e. "Everybody must try to do their best", Jill said. _____
f. "Jane may move to a new flat", Rachel said. _____
g. "I'll stay at home on Sunday", Bill said. _____

3. Report what the guests said at a wedding last Sunday.

a. Miss Moore: "They'll make a lovely couple." _____
b. Mr Smith: "They're going to live in Brighton." _____
c. Mrs Jones: "The bride and the groom are very nice young people." _____
_____
d. Mr Roberts: "The bride is wearing a beautiful wedding dress." _____
_____
e. Mr Clarke: "The couple's parents look happy." _____
f. Miss Mayall: "The bride's father has bought them a big flat." _____
_____

4. Change the following statements into the reported speech.

a. "I have something to show you", I said to her.
_____
b. "I'm going away tomorrow", he said.
_____
c. "I've been in London for a month but I haven't had time to visit the Tower", said Rupert.
_____
d. "I'll come with you as soon as I'm ready", she replied.
_____
e. "We have a lift but very often it doesn't work", they said.
_____
f. "I must go to the dentist tomorrow", he said.
_____
g. "I found an old Roman coin in the garden yesterday and I am going to take it to the museum this afternoon", he said.
_____

5. Write these sentences in indirect speech.

a. "I'm very tired", she said. _____
b. "I'll see them soon", he said. _____
c. "I'm going to the cinema", she said. _____
d. "I see the children quite often", he said. _____
e. "I'm having a bath", she said. _____
f. "I've already met their parents", she said. _____
g. "I stayed in a hotel for a few weeks", she said. _____
h. "I must go home to make dinner", he said. _____
i. "I haven't been waiting long", she said. _____
j. "I'm listening to the radio", he said. _____
k. "I'll tell them the news on Saturday", she said. _____
l. "I like swimming, dancing and playing tennis", he said. _____
_____

m. "I can drive", she said. _____
n. "I walked home after the party", he said. _____
o. "I'm going to be sick", she said. _____
p. "I must go out to post a letter", he said. _____
q. "I spoke to Jane last week", she said. _____
r. "I'm trying to listen to the music", he said. _____
s. "I'll phone the office from the airport", she said. _____
t. "I can't speak any foreign languages", he said. _____

6. Write these sentences in indirect speech, changing words where necessary.

a. "I'll see you tomorrow", she said.
_____
b. "I saw her today", he said.
_____
c. "I don't like this film", she said.
_____
d. She said, "We went swimming today."
_____
e. "I met her about three months ago", he said.
_____
f. "I'll see Mary on Sunday", she said.
_____
g. "Pete and Sue are getting married tomorrow", she said.
_____
h. "Stephen's bringing some records to the party tomorrow", she said.
_____
i. "I really like this furniture", she said.
_____
j. "My parents are arriving tomorrow", she said.
_____
k. "We visited her this morning" they said.
_____
l. "We'll see her next summer" they said.
_____
m. "They were here three months ago", he said.
_____
n. "I'm meeting them at four o'clock today", he said.
_____
o. "I can see you tomorrow", she said.
_____

QUESTIONS

7. Report the police-officer's questions to the shop owner.

a. What's your name? _____
b. Did you see the robbers? _____
c. What were they wearing? _____
d. How do you think they got in? _____
e. What did they take? _____

f. Has this ever happened before? _____

8. Write these sentences as reported questions using the words given.

a. "What's your name?", he asked. (wanted to know)

_____

b. "Do you like Marlon Brandon?", she asked.

_____

c. "How old are you?", she said. (asked)

_____

d. "When does the train leave?", I asked.

_____

e. "Are you enjoying yourself?", he asked.

_____

f. "How are you?", he said. (asked)

_____

g. "Does your father work here?", she asked.

_____

h. "Do you live near your father?", he asked.

_____

i. "Who did you see at the meeting?", my mother asked.

_____

j. "Why did you take my wallet?", he asked.

_____

k. "How did you get to school?", she asked.

_____

l. "Are you a foreigner?", she asked.

_____

m. "Where do you live?", the boy asked.

_____

n. "Have you met Danny before?", he asked.

_____

o. "Are you hungry?", he asked.

_____

p. "Why wasn't Judy at the party?", she asked.

_____

q. "Why didn't you telephone?", my father asked.

_____

r. "Did you borrow my dictionary?", he asked.

_____

s. "Why are you so late?", the teacher asked.

_____

t. "Have you finished your exams?", she asked.

_____

u. "Did you invite Judy and Mitch?", he asked.

_____

v. "Does your brother live in London?", she asked.

_____

w. "Why didn't the police report the crime?", the judge asked.

_____

x. "Do you know who broke the window?", he asked.

_____

y. "Why you won't let me in?", he shouted.

_____

COMMANDS, REQUESTS AND ADVICE

9. Rewrite these sentences in reported speech.

a. "Make some coffee, Bob", Carol said.(ask)

_____

b. "You must do the homework soon, Jane", she said.(tell)

_____

c. "Remember to buy a map, Ann" he said.(remind)

_____

d. "You should see a doctor, Mrs Clark", he said.(advise)

_____

e. "Keep all the windows closed, Bill" they said.(warn)

_____

f. "Go home, Paul", Francis said.(tell)

_____

g. "Please stay for supper, Bob", he said.(try to persuade)

_____

10. Report the following sentences.

a. "Don't try to be funny."

_____

b. "Wait here till I come."

_____

c. "Go to bed and don't get up till you're called."

_____

d. "Be a good girl and sit quietly for five minutes."

_____

e. "Watch the milk and don't let it boil over."

_____

f. "Don't take your coat off."

_____

g. "Don't forget to thank Mrs Jones when you're saying good bye to her."

_____

h. "Stop that dog."

_____

11. Write the sentences in reported speech using the words given.

a. "Sit down, Mary." (he told)

_____

b. "Would you pass my suitcase?" (he asked)

_____

c. "Don't go near the sea, children." (the children's mother warned)

_____

d. "Don't be late, Tim." (Tim's father told)

_____

e. "Be quiet, children." (the librarian told)

_____

f. "Have your tickets ready, please." (the inspector told us)

_____

SAY AND TELL

12. Use the correct form of SAY and TELL in these sentences.

a. She _____ me she didn't agree.
b. He _____ , "Have we met before?"
c. I _____ them I wasn't happy with their work.
d. She smiled and _____ to me, "I'm very pleased to meet you."
e. She _____ me a story about her parents.
f. He _____, "Are you feeling OK?"
g. I didn't hear. What did he _____?
h. Could you _____ me the time, please?
i. They _____ me they were going to a meeting.
j. I _____ the police my address.
k. I _____ I wanted to buy a magazine.
l. He _____ he wasn't interested in politics.
m. Could you _____ me your name again?
n. Do you think he is _____ the truth?
o. Would you _____ him to come early tomorrow?
p. If he _____ that again there'll be trouble.
q. I _____ them it was dangerous to swim here.
r. Did you _____ anything to him about your problem at work?
s. _____ me what happened.
t. I think he is _____ lies.
u. The policeman _____ the man was lying.
v. Philip _____ it would probably rain tomorrow.
w. Susan _____, "Let's go out for dinner tonight."
x. Jim _____ me about the party last night.
y. Our teacher _____ he was pleased with our work.
z. Stop _____ lies!

OFFERS AND SUGGESTIONS

13. Rewrite the sentences with the gerund or the infinitive and the in reported speech.

a. "I'll bring my CDs to the party."
He promised *to bring his CDs to the party.*
b. "Let's go to the cinema tonight, shall we?
She suggested _____
c. "Yes, I stole the wallet."
He admitted _____
d. "Be careful! The water is boiling."
She warned us _____
e. "You must apologise to your teacher."
My father insisted (on) _____
f. "All right! I'll share the expenses with you."
My friend agreed _____