


Reported speech (1) (He said that...)

A

Study this example situation:



You want to tell somebody else what Tom said. There are two ways of doing this: You can repeat Tom's words (*direct speech*): Tom said 'I'm feeling ill.' Or you can use *reported speech*: Tom said that he was feeling ill.

Compare:

<i>direct:</i>	Tom said	I	am	feeling ill.'	<i>In writing we use these to show direct speech.</i>
<i>reported:</i>	Tom said that	he	was	feeling ill.	

B

When we use reported speech, the main verb of the sentence is usually past (Tom said that... / I told her that... etc.). The rest of the sentence is usually past too:

- Tom said that he was feeling ill.
- I told her that I didn't have any money.


You can leave out **that**:

- Tom said (that) he was feeling ill.
- I told her (that) I didn't have any money.

In general, the *present* form in direct speech changes to the *past* form in reported speech:

am/is → was	do/does → did	will → would
are → were	have/has → had	can → could
want/like/know/go etc. → wanted/liked/knew/went etc.		

Compare direct speech and reported speech:

<p>You met Judy. Here are some of the things she said to you in <i>direct speech</i>:</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p>'My parents are very well.'</p> <p>'I'm going to learn to drive.'</p> <p>'John has given up his job.'</p> <p>'I can't come to the party on Friday.'</p> <p>'I want to go away for a holiday but I don't know where to go.'</p> <p>'I'm going away for a few days. I'll phone you when I get back.'</p> </div>  <p style="text-align: center; margin-top: 5px;">JUDY</p>	<p>Later you tell somebody what Judy said. You use <i>reported speech</i>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Judy said that her parents were very well. ● She said that she was going to learn to drive. ● She said that John had given up his job. ● She said that she couldn't come to the party on Friday. ● She said that she wanted to go away for a holiday but (she) didn't know where to go. ● She said that she was going away for a few days and would phone me when she got back.
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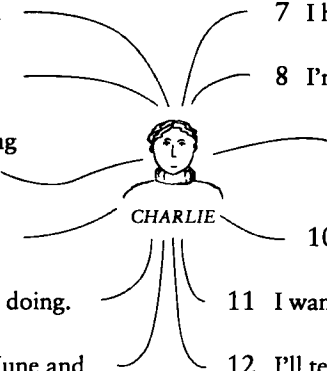
C

The *past simple* (did/saw/knew etc.) can usually stay the same in reported speech, or you can change it to the *past perfect* (had done / had seen / had known etc.):

<i>direct</i>	Tom said: 'I woke up feeling ill, so I didn't go to work.'
<i>reported</i>	Tom said (that) he woke up feeling ill, so he didn't go to work. or
	Tom said (that) he had woken up feeling ill, so he hadn't gone to work.

EXERCISES

46.1 Yesterday you met a friend of yours, Charlie. Here are some of the things Charlie said to you:

- 
- 1 I'm living in London now.
 - 2 My father isn't very well.
 - 3 Sharon and Paul are getting married next month.
 - 4 Margaret has had a baby.
 - 5 I don't know what Fred is doing.
 - 6 I saw Helen at a party in June and she seemed fine.
 - 7 I haven't seen Diane recently.
 - 8 I'm not enjoying my job very much.
 - 9 You can come and stay at my flat if you are ever in London.
 - 10 My car was stolen a few weeks ago.
 - 11 I want to go on holiday but I can't afford it.
 - 12 I'll tell Ann I saw you.

Later that day you tell another friend what Charlie said. Use reported speech.

- 1 ...Charlie said that he was living in London now.
- 2 He said that
- 3 He
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 10
- 11
- 12

46.2 Somebody says something to you which is the opposite of what they said before. Write a suitable answer beginning I thought you said... .

- 1 A: That restaurant is expensive.
B: Is it? ...I thought you said it was cheap.
- 2 A: Ann is coming to the party tonight.
B: Is she? I thought you said she
- 3 A: Ann likes Paul.
B: Does she? I thought
- 4 A: I know lots of people.
B: Do you? I thought you said you
- 5 A: I'll be here next week.
B: Will you?
- 6 A: I'm going out this evening.
B: Are you?
- 7 A: I can speak a little French.
B: Can you?
- 8 A: I haven't been to the cinema for ages.
B: Haven't you?

Reported speech (2)

A

It is not always necessary to change the verb when you use reported speech. If you report something and it is still true, you do not need to change the verb:


- *direct* Tom said 'New York is more lively than London.'
- *reported* Tom said that New York **is** more lively than London.
(New York is *still* more lively. The situation hasn't changed.)
- *direct* Ann said 'I want to go to New York next year.'
- *reported* Ann said that she **wants** to go to New York next year.
(Ann still wants to go to New York next year.)

Note that it is also correct to change the verb into the past:


- Tom said that New York **was** more lively than London.
- Ann said that she **wanted** to go to New York next year.

But you *must* use a past form when there is a difference between what was said and what is really true. Study this example situation:

You met Sonia a few days ago.
She said: 'Jim is ill.' (*direct speech*)




YOU




SONIA

Later that day you see Jim. He is looking well and carrying a tennis racket.
You say:
'I didn't expect to see you, Jim. Sonia said you were ill.'
(*not* 'Sonia said you are ill', because clearly he is not ill.)



YOU



B

Say and tell

If you say *who* you are talking to, use **tell**:

- Sonia **told me** that you were ill. (*not* 'Sonia said me')
- What did you **tell the police**? (*not* 'say the police')

TELL SOMEBODY

Otherwise use **say**:

- Sonia **said** that you were ill. (*not* 'Sonia told that...')
- What did you **say**?

~~SAY SOMEBODY~~

But you can 'say something to somebody':

- Ann **said goodbye to me** and left. (*not* 'Ann said me goodbye')
- What did you **say to the police**?

C

Tell/ask somebody to do something

We also use the infinitive (**to do / to stay** etc.) in reported speech, especially with **tell** and **ask** (for orders and requests):

- *direct* 'Stay in bed for a few days,' the doctor said to me.
- *reported* The doctor **told me to stay** in bed for a few days.
- *direct* 'Don't shout,' I said to Jim.
- *reported* I **told Jim not to shout**.
- *direct* 'Please don't tell anybody what happened,' Ann said to me.
- *reported* Ann **asked me not to tell** anybody what (had) happened.

'...said to do something' is also possible:

- The doctor **said to stay** in bed for a few days. (*but not* 'The doctor said me...')

EXERCISES

47.1 Here are some things that Ann said to you:

ANN

- I've never been to the United States.
- I don't have any brothers or sisters.
- I can't drive.
- Jane is a friend of mine.
- I don't like fish.
- ~~Dave is lazy.~~
- I'm working tomorrow evening.
- Jane has a very well-paid job.

YOU

But later Ann says something different to you. What do you say?

1	Dave works very hard.	But you said he was lazy...
2	Let's have fish for dinner.	
3	I'm going to buy a car.	
4	Jane is always short of money.	
5	My sister lives in London.	
6	I think New York is a fantastic place.	
7	Let's go out tomorrow evening.	
8	I've never spoken to Jane.	

47.2 Complete the sentences with say or tell (in the correct form). Use only one word each time.

- Ann ~~said~~ goodbye to me and left.
- us about your holiday. Did you have a nice time?
- Don't just stand there! something!
- I wonder where Sue is. She she would be here at 8 o'clock.
- Jack me that he was fed up with his job.
- The doctor that I should rest for at least a week.
- Don't anybody what I It's a secret just between us.
- 'Did she you what happened?' 'No, she didn't anything to me.'
- George couldn't help me. He me to ask Kate.
- George couldn't help me. He to ask Kate.

47.3 (Section C) The following sentences are direct speech:

- Don't wait for me if I'm late.
- Will you marry me?
- Hurry up!
- Can you open your bag, please?
- Mind your own business.
- Please slow down!
- Could you repeat what you said, please?
- Don't worry, Sue.
- Do you think you could give me a hand, Tom?

Now choose one of these to complete each sentence below. Use reported speech.

- Bill was taking a long time to get ready, so I told him to hurry up.....
- Sarah was driving too fast, so I asked
- Sue was very pessimistic about the situation. I told
- I couldn't move the piano alone, so I
- The customs officer looked at me suspiciously and
- I had difficulty understanding him, so I
- I didn't want to delay Ann, so I
- John was very much in love with Mary, so he
- He started asking me personal questions, so

KEY TO EXERCISES

UNIT 46

46.1

- 2 He said that his father wasn't very well.
- 3 He said that Sharon and Paul were getting married next month.
- 4 He said that Margaret had had a baby.
- 5 He said that he didn't know what Fred was doing.
- 6 He said that he had / he'd seen Helen at a party in June and she had seemed fine. *or* He said that he saw Helen... and she seemed...
- 7 He said that he hadn't seen Diane recently.
- 8 He said that he wasn't enjoying his job very much.
- 9 He said that I could come and stay at his flat if I was ever in London.
- 10 He said that his car had been stolen a few weeks ago. *or* ...that his car was stolen...
- 11 He said he wanted to go on holiday but he couldn't afford it.
- 12 He said he would / he'd tell Ann he had / he'd seen me. *or* ...he saw me.

46.2

Example answers:

- 2 I thought you said she wasn't coming. / ...she was going somewhere else.
- 3 I thought you said she didn't like him.
- 4 I thought you said you didn't know many people.
- 5 I thought you said you wouldn't be here next week. / ...you would be away...
- 6 I thought you said you were staying at home. / ...you weren't going out.
- 7 I thought you said you couldn't speak (any) French.
- 8 I thought you said you went to the cinema last week. / ...you had been to the cinema last week.

UNIT 47

47.1

- 2 But you said you didn't like fish.
- 3 But you said you couldn't drive.
- 4 But you said Jane had a very well-paid job.
- 5 But you said you didn't have any brothers or sisters.
- 6 But you said you had never been to the United States.

- 7 But you said you were working tomorrow evening.
- 8 But you said Jane was a friend of yours.

47.2

- | | |
|--------|-----------------|
| 2 Tell | 7 tell ... said |
| 3 Say | 8 tell ... say |
| 4 said | 9 told |
| 5 told | 10 said |
| 6 said | |

47.3

- 2 her to slow down.
- 3 her not to worry.
- 4 asked Tom to give me a hand.
- 5 asked me to open my bag.
- 6 asked him to repeat what he (had) said.
- 7 told her not to wait for me if I was late.
- 8 asked her to marry him.
- 9 I told him to mind his own business.

UNIT 48

48.1

- 2 Where do you live now?
- 3 Are you married?
- 4 How long have you been married?
- 5 Have you got (any) children? *or* Do you have (any) children?
- 6 How old are they?
- 7 What does your husband do?
- 8 Does he enjoy his job?
- 9 Did he arrest anyone yesterday?
- 10 How often do you go on holiday?
- 11 Where are you going next year? *or* Where are you going to go...?

48.2

- 3 Who gave you the key? *or* Who gave it to you?
- 4 What happened?
- 5 What did she tell you? *or* What did Diane tell you?
- 6 Who does it belong to? *or* Who does this book...?
- 7 Who lives in that house? *or* Who lives there?
- 8 What did you fall over?
- 9 What fell on the floor?
- 10 What does it mean? *or* What does this word mean?
- 11 Who did you borrow it from? *or* ...borrow the money from?
- 12 What are you worried about?

48.3

- 2 How is cheese made?
- 3 When was the computer invented?