

Direct and Indirect Speech

What is Direct and Indirect Speech?

The words of a speaker can be reported in two ways:

1. Using the direct words of the speaker
2. Reporting what the speaker said

Direct speech involves quoting the exact words of the speaker.

Indirect (Reported) speech is used to report what a person said.

Examples

Direct: Suraj said, "I don't like the game at all."

Indirect: Suraj said that he didn't like the game at all.

Direct: Kevin said, "Please pass me a sheet of paper."

Indirect: Kevin requested someone to pass him a sheet of paper.

Direct: Lalit asked, "Why is Omi standing outside the class?"

Indirect: Lalit asked why Omi was standing outside the class.

- We use quotation marks in direct speech.
- A comma is used before the quotation marks in direct speech.

Changing the Tense in Direct and Indirect Speech

Tenses	
Direct Speech	Indirect Speech
Simple Present She said, "It's raining."	Simple Past She said that it was raining.
Present Continuous She said, "I'm eating pasta."	Past Continuous She said that she was eating pasta.
Present Perfect Continuous She said, "I've been learning salsa for five years."	Past Perfect Continuous She said that she had been learning salsa for five years.
Simple Past She said, "I taught Jyoti yesterday."	Past Perfect She said that she had taught Jyoti yesterday.
Past Continuous She said, "I was an architect earlier."	Past Perfect Continuous She said that she had been an architect earlier.
Past Perfect She said, "The movie had already started when they arrived."	Past Perfect She said that the movie had already started when they arrived.
Past Perfect Continuous She said, "I'd already been teaching for five minutes."	Past Perfect Continuous She said that she'd already been teaching for five minutes.

Use the present tense in indirect speech to report facts and universal truths.

- **Direct Speech:** "My name is Ravi," he said.
- **Indirect Speech:** He said that his name is Ravi.

The present tense is also used if you are talking about a future event.

- **Direct Speech:** "Next week's lecture is on Chemistry," she said.
- **Indirect Speech:** She said next week's lecture will be on Chemistry.

Rules for Changing Modal Auxiliaries in Indirect Speech

Modals	
Direct Speech	Indirect Speech
will She said, "I will buy milk tomorrow."	would She said she would buy milk tomorrow.
can She said, "I can buy books online."	could She said she could buy books online.
must She said, "I must have a room for the guests."	had to She said she had to have a room for the guests.
shall She said, "What shall we read today?"	should She asked what we should read today.
may She said, "May I start my presentation?"	might She asked if she might start her presentation.
There is no change to <i>could, would, should, might</i> and <i>ought to</i>.	

Rules for Changing Expressions of Time

Direct Speech	Indirect Speech
this (evening)	that (evening)
Priti asked, "Are you visiting Granny this Friday?"	Priti asked if I was visiting Granny that Friday.
today	that(very) day
The coach said, "We need to run an extra hour today."	The coach said that we needed to run an extra hour that very day.
yesterday	day before/previous day
"Didn't I warn you <u>yesterday</u> ?" said the boss.	The boss asked whether or not he warned him <u>the day before</u> .
these (days)	those (days)
Rita said, "Everything is expensive these days."	Rita said that everything was expensive those days.
(a week) ago/ last week	(a week) before
Radha said, "I wrote to you a week ago."	Radha said that she wrote to me a week before.
last weekend	previous weekend
Aarti said, "We went out for a movie <u>last weekend</u> ."	Aarti said that they went out for a movie the <u>previous weekend</u> .
here	there
Mark said, "Sit <u>here</u> !"	Mark ordered him to sit <u>there</u> .

Direct to Indirect Speech – Types of Sentences

The reporting verb 'said' is changed according to the following rules from direct to indirect speech.

Declarative Sentences

The reporting verb *said* may change to *replied, answered, informed, warned, stated, mentioned* or *explained*.

Interrogative Sentences

Said may change to *asked*.

Imperative Sentences

Said may change to

- *ordered, commanded* or *told* for **commands**
- *asked, requested, pleaded* or *begged* for **requests**
- *suggested, urged, forbade, warned* or *advised* for **suggestions**

Exclamatory Sentences

Said may change to *exclaimed with joy/sorrow/delight/anger/fear/surprise* depending on the emotions conveyed.

A direct narration expressing wish or prayer:

Said may change to *wished, prayed, blessed* or *cursed* based on what needs to be conveyed.

Examples

Direct Speech: Kajal said, "I am going to Hampi next week."

Indirect Speech: Kajal said that she was going to Hampi the week after.

Direct Speech: Sunita said, "Arun, please return the books to the library."

Indirect Speech: Sunita requested Arun to return the books to the library.

Direct Speech: Mother said to me, "What time will your friend come? Buy some snacks for her way back home."

Indirect Speech: Mother asked me what time my friend would come and told me to buy some snacks on my way back home.

Direct Speech: Rupa said, "Hetal, will you come with me to the café?"

Indirect Speech: Rupa asked Hetal if she would go with her to the café.

Direct Speech: Goldie asked Surinder, "Where have you kept the hammer? Surinder said, "It is in the tool box on the attic."

Indirect Speech: Goldie asked Surinder where he had kept the hammer. Surinder replied that it was in the tool box in the attic.

Direct Speech: Somesh said, "I wish Kavita had waited for the whole session."

Indirect Speech: Somesh said that he wished Kavita had waited for the whole session.

Direct Speech: The guide said, "This chariot was carved out of a single stone 4000 years ago."

Indirect Speech: The guide said that the chariot was carved out of a single stone 4000 years before.

Direct Speech: "Excuse me. Do you know when the doctor will come? Ganesh asked John. John said, "He will be here in half an hour."

Indirect Speech: Ganesh asked John what time the doctor would come. John told him that he would be there in half an hour.

Direct Speech: Mohini told Mahesh, "I have decided to start working again."

Indirect Speech: Mohini told Mahesh that she had decided to start working again.