

English Grammar - Reported Speech

1. Statements

a) If the reporting sentence is in the **present**, then there is **no change of tense** in the reported speech.

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

b) If the reporting sentence is in the **past**, then there is a **change of tense**.

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

Change in pronouns and possessive adjectives

We need to change the pronouns and possessive adjectives appropriately.

Example: Bob: "I always do **my** homework."
Bob said that **he** always did **his** homework.

Changes of Tense	
Direct Speech	Reported Speech
Present Simple "I work in the garden."	a) Present Simple He says that he works in the garden. b) Past Simple He said that he worked in the garden.
Past Simple "I worked in the garden."	Past Perfect Simple He said that he had worked in the garden.
Present Perfect Simple "I have worked in the garden."	
Past Perfect Simple "I had worked in the garden."	
Future Simple (will) "I will work in the garden."	would He said that he would work in the garden.
can "I can work in the garden."	could He said that he could work in the garden.
might/could/would/should "I might work in the garden."	might/could/would/should (<i>no change</i>) He said that he might work in the garden.
must/have to "I must work in the garden."	must/had to He said that he must/had to work in the garden.
Present Continuous "I'm working in the garden."	Past Continuous He said that he was working in the garden.
Past Continuous "I was working in the garden."	Past Perfect Continuous He said that he had been working in the garden.
Present Perfect Continuous "I have been working in the garden."	
Past Perfect Continuous "I had been working in the garden."	

Verb tense changes (summary):

Present Simple "I **go** to church every week"
↓
Past Simple He said that he **went** to church every week.

Past Simple "I **went** to church yesterday"
↓
Past Perfect Simple He said that he **had gone** to church the day before.

Present Continuous "I **am reading**"
↓
Past Continuous He said that he **was reading**.

Past Continuous "I **was reading**"
↓
Past Perfect Continuous He said that he **had been reading**.

Present Perfect Simple "I **have visited** Rome many times"
↓
Past Perfect Simple He said that he **had visited** Rome many times.

2. Questions

In *Reported Speech* there is no question anymore, the sentence becomes a statement. So the word order is: **subject + verb**, and there is no auxiliary verb.

Y/N questions: Peter: "**Do you play** football?"
Peter asked me **if I played** football.

W/H questions: Peter: "**When do you play** football?"
Peter asked me **when I played** football.

3. Commands

If you report a command, we use the form: **tell + (not) infinitive**

Direct Speech	Reported Speech
Father: " Do your homework."	My father told me to do my homework.
Teacher. " Don't talk in class."	The teacher told me not to talk in class.

Expressions of Time

If the sentence contains an expression of time, you must change it in the reported speech.

Example: Peter: "I worked in the garden **yesterday**."
Peter said that he had worked in the garden **the day before**.

Direct Speech	Reported Speech
this morning/afternoon/evening	that morning/afternoon/evening
today	that day
these days	those days
now	then / that time
yesterday	the day before / the previous day
last week	the week before / the previous week
last weekend	the weekend before / the previous weekend
last summer	the summer before / the previous summer
last year	the year before / the previous year
six hours ago	six hours before
ten days ago	ten days before
two weeks ago	two weeks before
tomorrow	the day after / the following day / the next day
next week	the week after / the following week / the next week
next month	the month after / the following month / the next month

Recommended Videos:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sIZgb2xN99M> (7 mins)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3PZTVs3jWUE> (7 mins)

Exercise 1 – Statements

*Example: John: "I cleaned my shoes yesterday"
John said that he had cleaned his shoes the day before"*

1) Helen: "I like chocolate."

Helen said that

2) Emily: "My teacher will go to Paris tomorrow."

Emily said that

3) Robert: "My father visited Dallas last month."

Robert said that

4) Lisa: "Tim watched the game an hour ago."

Lisa said that

5) Patricia: "My mother will celebrate her birthday next weekend."

Patricia said that

6) Angela: "Simon should go to the doctor."

Angela said that

Exercise 2 – Questions

*Example: Billy: "Did you wash the dishes?"
Billy asked me if I had washed the dishes"*

1) Christopher: "Do you want to dance?"

Christopher asked me

2) Betty: "When did you arrive?"

Betty wanted to know

3) Mark: "Has John arrived?"

Mark asked me

4) Mandy: "Can I help you?"

Mandy wanted to know

5) Andrew: "Will Mandy have lunch with Sue?"

Andrew asked me

6) Justin: "What are you doing?"

Justin asked me

Exercise 3 – Commands

Examples: *Father: "**Clean your shoes!**"*
*My father **told me to clean my shoes.***

*Father: "**Don't shout!**"*
*My father **told me not to shout.***

1) Mum: "Wash your hands!"

Mum told me

2) Jessica: "Do your homework!"

Jessica told me

3) Grandpa: "Don't play football in the garden!"

My grandpa told me

4) Teacher: "Don't forget to do your homework!"

The teacher reminded me

Online exercises:

https://www.englisch-hilfen.de/en/exercises/reported_speech/pronouns.htm

https://www.englisch-hilfen.de/en/exercises/reported_speech/statements.htm

https://www.englisch-hilfen.de/en/exercises/reported_speech/backshift.htm

https://www.englisch-hilfen.de/en/exercises/reported_speech/questions.htm

https://www.englisch-hilfen.de/en/exercises/reported_speech/questions2.htm