

Reported speech

- We use reported speech to report (i.e. to tell another person) what someone said.
- When the reporting verb (*said, told, etc.*) is in the past tense, the tenses in the sentence which is being reported usually change like this:
present > past
will > *would*
past simple / present perfect > past perfect
- Using **that** after *said* and *told* is optional.

direct statements

'I like travelling.'

'I'm leaving tomorrow.'

'I'll always love you.'

'I passed the exam!'

'I've forgotten my keys.'

reported statements

She said (that) **she liked** travelling.

He told her (that) **he was** leaving **the next day**.

He said (that) **he would** always love **me**.

She told me (that) **she had passed** the exam.

He said (that) **he had** forgotten **his** keys.

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- Some modal verbs change, e.g. *can*>*could*, *may*>*might*, *must*>*had to*. Other modal verbs stay the same, e.g. *could*, *might*, *should*, etc.

'I can't come.'

She said (that) **she couldn't** come.

'I may be late.'

He said (that) **he might** be late.

'I must go.'

She said (that) **she had to** go.

- You usually have to change the pronouns, e.g. 'I like jazz.' Jane said that **she** liked jazz.
- If you report what someone said on a different day or in a different place, some other time and place words can change, e.g. *tomorrow*>*the next day*, *here*>*there*, *this*>*that*, etc.
'I'll meet you **here tomorrow**.' He said he'd meet me **there the next day**.



say and tell

Be careful – after *said* don't use a person or an object pronoun:

He said he was tired. NOT *He said me...*

After *told* you must use a person or pronoun:

Sarah told Cally that she would call her. NOT

Sarah told that she...

He told me he was tired. NOT *He told he was...*

Reported questions

- When you report a question the tenses change as in reported statements.
- When a question doesn't begin with a question word, add *if* (or *whether*).
'Do you want a drink?' He asked me **if** / **whether** I wanted a drink.
- You also have to change the word order to subject + verb, and not use *do* / *did*.

| direct questions | reported questions (4 34)) |
|----------------------|---|
| 'Are you married?' | She asked him if he was married. |
| 'Did she phone?' | He asked me whether she had phoned . |
| 'What's your name?' | I asked him what his name was . |
| 'Where do you live?' | They asked me where I lived . |

Activities

a Complete the sentences using reported speech.

'I'm in love with another woman.'

My boyfriend told me he was in love with another woman.

- 1 'I'm selling all my books.' My brother said _____.
- 2 'I've booked the flights.' Emma told me _____.
- 3 'Your new dress doesn't suit you.' My mother told me _____.
- 4 'I may not be able to go to the party.' Matt said _____.
- 5 'I won't wear these shoes again.' Jenny said _____.
- 6 'I didn't buy you a present.' My girlfriend told me _____.
- 7 'I must get a dress for the party.' Rachel said _____.
- 8 'I haven't been to the gym for a long time.' Kevin said _____.
- 9 'I found a bargain in the sales.' My sister told me _____.
- 10 'I can't find anywhere to park.' Luke told me _____.

b Complete the sentences using reported speech.

'Why did you dump your girlfriend?' My friend asked me *why I had dumped my girlfriend*.

- 1 'When are you leaving?' My parents asked me _____.
- 2 'Have you ever been engaged?' She asked him _____.
- 3 'Will you be home early?' Anna asked Liam _____.
- 4 'Where do you usually buy your clothes?' My sister asked me _____.
- 5 'Did you wear a suit to the job interview?' We asked him _____.
- 6 'Do you ever go to the theatre?' I asked Lisa _____.
- 7 'What time will you arrive?' He asked us _____.
- 8 'How much money did you spend in the sales?' I asked my girlfriend _____.
- 9 'Can you help me?' Sally asked the policeman _____.
- 10 'What size are you?' The shop assistant asked me _____.