Reported speech

68 Reported statements: tense changes

- We use reported speech to report what someone said earlier. After a past tense reporting verb (e.g. *said, told*), the original verb forms usually move one tense into the past, and the pronouns and possessive adjectives change: ***'I like** pizza,' Tim said.* (direct speech) → *Tim said (that)* ***he liked** pizza.* (reported speech)
  ***'You look** great,' I told Anna.* → *I told Anna (that)* ***she looked** great.*

Direct speech (actual words)		Reported speech
present simple	→	past simple
present continuous	→	past continuous
present perfect/past simple	→	past perfect
past continuous/ present perfect continuous	→	past perfect continuous
past perfect	→	past perfect
will	→	*would*
am/is/are going to	→	*was/were going to*
can	→	*could*
may	→	*might*
must	→	*must/had to*

- *Could, would* and *might* don't change in reported speech: ***'I might** come with you,' she said.* → *She said (that) she* ***might** come with us.*
- *Say* and *tell* are the most common reporting verbs for statements. Notice how they are used:
  – *He* ***said** (**to me**) (**that**) he was tired.* (Not ~~*He said me that he was tired.*~~)
  – *He* ***told me** (**that**) he was tired.* (Not ~~*He told that he was tired.*~~)

PRACTICE

68a Report the statements.

0 'I've got an awful headache.' Kim said *(that) she had an awful headache*.
1 'I haven't been feeling well all day.' She ..... .
2 'I've found some great trainers.' Tom ..... .
3 'I wasn't looking for them.' He ..... .
4 'I'm going to wear them to college.' He ..... .
5 'I didn't see David.' Lisa ..... .
6 'I called him.' She ..... .
7 'I'm staying at home.' Ben ..... .

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8 'I don't feel like going out.' He ..... .

9 'I'm late.' Amy ..... .

10 'I have to be there at eight.' She ..... .

68b Report the conversation.

0 'I'm going to the park with my brother,' Paul said.
Paul said (that) he was going to the park with his brother.

1 'We're going to have a game of football,' he said.
.....

2 'I might come too,' Stephen said.
.....

3 'We'll be in our usual place,' Paul said.
.....

4 'I can't stay long because my friends are coming at six,' Stephen said.
.....

5 'They're taking me to the skate park in Burnley,' he said.
.....

6 'I've never been there before,' he said.
.....

7 'I'd like to go to the skate park in Manchester,' Paul said.
.....

8 'We could go together,' Stephen said.
.....

68c Read the conversation. Then complete the diary entry. Use one word in each gap.

Emma: I'm really stressed! Someone at college is being horrible to me.

Becky: Someone did the same thing to me once. I spoke to her and she stopped criticising me.

Emma: Speaking to her will make things worse!

Becky: You must do something. You can't ignore it.

Emma (0) ....*told*.... me that she (1) ..... really stressed. She (2) ..... that someone at college was being horrible to (3) ..... . I said that someone (4) ..... done the same thing to me once. I (5) ..... her that I'd spoken to the girl and that she (6) ..... stopped criticising me. Emma said that speaking to her (7) ..... make things worse. I told (8) ..... that she (9) ..... to do something and that she (10) .....n't ignore it.

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69 Reported statements: other changes

- Place and time references often change when we report what someone said in a different place or at an earlier time. Compare:

Actual words	Words reported later
Spoken outside the cinema: *'I'll meet you **here**,' Kate said.*	Spoken somewhere else: *Kate said she'd meet us **there/at the cinema**.*
Spoken on Sunday: *'I'm going to a party **tonight**,' Matt said.*	Spoken the following Tuesday: *Matt said he was going to a party **on Sunday night**.*

- These words/phrases often change in reported speech:

Direct speech		Reported speech
this/that (+noun)	→	*the*
this morning	→	*that morning, on Friday morning,* etc.
now	→	*then*
today, tonight	→	*that day/night, on Friday/Friday night,* etc.
yesterday	→	*the day before, the previous day, on Friday,* etc.
tomorrow	→	*the next/following day, on Friday,* etc.
last week, last Friday	→	*the week/Friday before, the previous week/Friday*
next week, next Friday	→	*the week/Friday after, the following week/Friday*
an hour ago	→	*an hour before*

PRACTICE

69a Complete the reported statements. Use one word in each gap.

0 'I can't understand this film,' she said.
She said she couldn't understand ..... *the* ..... film.

1 'I'm playing football this evening,' I told Tom.
I told Tom I was playing football ..... evening.

2 She said, 'There was an accident here last year.'
She said there had been an accident ..... the year ..... .

3 'I ordered two books three weeks ago,' I told the shop assistant.
I told the shop assistant I'd ordered two books three weeks ..... .

4 On Sunday, Adam told me, 'I've got an exam tomorrow.'
Adam told me he had an exam on ..... .

5 'I'll be in your group next term,' she said.
She said she'd be in my group the ..... term.

6 'I'm leaving now,' she told us.
She told us she was leaving ..... .

7 'It's really cold today,' Lucy told me.
Lucy told me it was really cold ..... day.

8 'I finished my exams last week,' he said.
He said he had finished his exams the ..... week.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

69b Complete the reported statements.

Nikki and Jessica met in a café two weeks ago. Now Nikki is reporting their conversation to a friend.

0 'I love the food at this café,' Jessica said.
Jessica said that she loved the food ..... *at the café* ..... .

1 'I saw Helen this afternoon,' she told me.
She told me that she'd seen Helen ..... .

2 'I saw her yesterday,' I said.
I said that I'd seen her ..... .

3 'My brother called two hours ago. He's going to meet me here,' I told her.
I told her that my brother had called two hours ..... and that he was going to meet me ..... .

4 'We're going bowling tonight,' I said.
I said that we were going bowling ..... .

5 'I don't have enough money for my coffee now. I'll pay you back next week,' she said.
She said that she didn't have enough money for her coffee ..... and that she'd pay me back ..... .
She still hasn't paid me!

70 Reported statements with no tense change

- If the reporting verb is in the present tense (e.g. *says*), the tense does not change in reported speech: *'I'**ll meet** you there.'* → *He **says he'll meet** us there.*
- If the statement we are reporting is still true in the present, we don't have to change the tense after a past tense reporting verb: *'It'**s** a good restaurant.'* → *Helen said it'**s** a good restaurant.* (This is still true now.) *'I'**ve got** a brother.'* → *He told me he'**s got** a brother.* (This is still true now.)
- But if the reporting verb is in the past tense, we can change the tense: *Helen said it **was** a good restaurant.* *He told me he **had** a brother.*

PRACTICE

70a Report the statements.

0 'We've got football practice.'
They say ..... *(that) they've got football practice* ..... .

1 'I'm exhausted.'
He says ..... .

2 'I'll be back at six.'
Paul says ..... .

3 'The film is wonderful!'
Everybody says ..... .

4 'I didn't borrow Kate's earrings.'
Caroline says ..... .

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