

Direct and indirect speech

Introduction.

There two ways to convey a message of a person, or the words spoken by a person to other person.

1. Direct speech
2. Indirect speech

Suppose your friend whose name is John tells you in school, "I will give you a pen". You come to home and you want to tell your brother what your friend told you. There are two ways to tell him.

Direct speech: John said, "I will give you a pen".

Indirect Speech: John said that he would give me a pen.

In direct speech the original words of person are narrated (no change is made) and are enclosed in quotation mark. While in indirect speech some changes are made in original words of the person because these words have been uttered in past so the tense will change accordingly and pronoun may also be changed accordingly. In indirect speech the statement of the person is not enclosed in quotation marks, the word "that" may be used before the statement to show that it is indirect speech. Indirect speech is also called reported speech because reported speech refers to the second part of indirect speech in which something has been told by a person.

Reporting verb: The verb first part of sentence (i.e. he said, she said, he says, they said, she says,) before the statement of a person in sentence is called reporting verb.

Examples. In all of the following example the reporting verb is "said".

He **said**, "I work in a factory" (Direct speech)

He **said** that he worked in a factory. (Indirect speech)

They **said**, "we are going to cinema" (Direct speech)

They **said** that they were going to cinema. (Indirect speech)

Reported Speech. The second part of indirect speech in which something has been told by a person (which is enclosed in quotation marks in direct speech) is called reported speech. For example, a sentence of indirect speech is, *He said that he worked in a factory*. In this sentence the second part "*he worked in a factory*" is called reported speech and that is why the indirect speech as a whole can also be called reported speech

Fundamental rules for indirect speech.

1. Reported speech is not enclosed in quotation marks.
2. **Use of word "that":** The word "that" is used as a conjunction between the reporting verb and reported speech.
3. **Change in pronoun:** The pronoun (subject) of the reported speech is changed according to the pronoun of reporting verb or object (person) of reporting verb (first part of sentence). Sometimes the pronoun may not change.

In following example the pronoun of reported speech is "I" which will be changed in indirect speech into the pronoun (Subject) of reporting verb that is "he".

Example.

Direct speech: He said, "I am happy"

Indirect Speech: He said that **he** was happy.

Direct speech: I said to him, "you are intelligent"

Indirect Speech: I said him that he was intelligent. ("You" changed to "he" the person of object of reporting verb)

1. **Change in time:** Time is changed according to certain rules like now to then, today to that day, tomorrow to next day and yesterday to previous day.

Examples.

Direct speech: He said, "I am happy today"

Indirect Speech: He said that he was happy **that day**.

1. **Change in the tense of reported speech:** If the first part of sentence (reporting verb part) belongs to past tense the tense of reported speech will change. If the first part of sentence (reporting verb part) belongs to present or future tense, the tense of reported speech will not change.

Examples.

Direct speech: He said, "I am happy"

Indirect Speech: He said that he was happy. (Tense of reported speech changed)

Direct speech: He says, "I am happy"

Indirect Speech: He said that he is happy. (Tense of reported speech didn't change)

Table for change in tense of reported speech for all TENSES.

TENSE CHANGE - IN – INDIRECT SPEECH

Present simple tense **into** Past simple

Present Continuous tense **into** Past continuous

Present Perfect tense **into** Pas perfect

Present Perfect Continuous **into** Past perfect continuous

Past simple **into** Past Perfect

Past Continuous **into** Past Perfect Continuous

Past Perfect **into** Past Perfect

Future simple, will **into** would

Future Continuous, will be **into** would be

Future Perfect, will have **into** would have

Examples.

DIRECT SPEECH	INDIRECT SPEECH
PRESENT TENSE	
PRESENT SIMPLE	PAST SIMPLE
changes into	
He said, "I write a letter" She said, "he goes to school daily" They said, "we love our country" He said, "he does not like computer"	He said that he wrote a letter. He said that she went to school daily. They said that they loved their country He said that he did not like computer.
PRESENT CONTINUOUS	PAST CONTINUOUS
changes into	
He said, "he is listening to the music" She said, "I am washing my clothes" They said, "we are enjoying the weather" I said, "it is raining" She said, "I am not laughing"	He said that he was listening to the music. She said that she was washing her clothes. They said that they were not enjoying the weather. She said that she was not laughing.

PRESENT PERFECT	changes into	PAST PERFECT
She said, "he has finished his work"		She said that he had finished his work.
He said, "I have started a job"		He said that he had started a job.
I said, "she have eaten the meal"		I said that she had eaten the meal.
They said, "we have not gone to New York."		They said that they had not gone to New York.

PRESENT PERFECT CONTINUOUS	changes into	PAST PERFECT CONTINUOUS
He said, "I have been studying since 3 O'clock"		He said that he had been studying since 3 O'clock.
She said, "It has been raining for three days."		She said that it been raining for three days.
I said, "She has been working in this office since 2007"		I said that she had been working in this office since 2007.

PAST TENSE

PAST SIMPLE	changes into	PAST PERFECT
He said to me, "you answered correctly"		He said to me that I had answered correctly.
John said, "they went to cinema"		John said that they had gone to cinema.
He said, "I made a table"		He said that he had made a table.
She said, "I didn't buy a car"		She said that she had not bought a car.

PAST CONTINUOUS	changes into	PAST PERFECT CONTINUOUS
They said, "we were enjoying the weather"		They said that they had been enjoying.
He said to me, " I was waiting for you"		He said to me that he had been waiting for me.
I said, "It was raining"		I said that it had been raining.
She said, "I was not laughing"		She said that she not been laughing.

PAST PERFECT	changes into	PAST PERFECT (tense does not change)
She said, "She had visited a doctor"		She said that she had visited a doctor.
He said, "I had started a business"		He said that he had started a business.
I said, "she had eaten the meal"		I said that she had eaten the meal.
They said, "we had not gone to New York."		They said they had not gone to New York.

FUTURE TENSE

FUTURE SIMPLE TENSE		
WILL changes into WOULD		
He said, "I will study the book"		He said that he would study the book.
She said, "I will buy a computer"		She said that she would buy a computer.
They said to me, "we will send you gifts"		They said to me that they would send you gifts.

FUTURE CONTINUOUS TENSE	
WILL BE	changes into
	WOULD BE
I said to him, " I will be waiting for him"	I said to him that I would be waiting for him.
She said," I will be shifting to new home"	She said that she would be shifting to anew home.
He said, "I will be working hard"	He said that he would be working hard.
He said, "he will not be flying kite"	She said that he would not be flying kites.

FUTURE PERFECT TENSE	
WILL HAVE	changes into
	WOULD HAVE
He said, "I will have finished the work"	He said that he would have finished the work.
She said, "they will have passed the examination"	She said that they would have passed the examination.
He said, "I will have gone"	He said that he would have gone.

Note: The tense of reported speech may not change if reported speech is a universal truth though its reporting verb belongs to past tense.

Examples.

Direct speech: He said, "Mathematics is a science"

Indirect Speech: He said that mathematics is a science.

Direct speech: He said, "Sun rises in east"

Indirect Speech: He said that sun rises in east. (Tense didn't change because reported speech is a universal truth though its reporting verb belongs to past tense)

Indirect speech for Interrogative (question) sentence.

For changing interrogative (question) sentence into indirect speech we have to observe the nature of question and then change it into indirect speech according to its rules for indirect speech. A question can be of two types. One type which can be answered in only YES or NO and other type which needs a little bit explanation for its answer and cannot be answered in only YES or NO.

Examples

Do you like music? (It can be answered in YES or NO)

How are you? (It cannot be answered in YES or NO but it needs a little bit explanation *i.e.*, I am fine.)

Questions which can be answered in YES/NO.

To change questions (which can be answered in yes or no) into indirect speech, word "if" or "whether" is used before the question in indirect speech. Rules for change in tense of question sentences are same as for change in normal tenses in indirect speech but sentence will not start with the auxiliary verb of the tense. The word "that" is not used between reporting verb and reported speech as conjunction in indirect speech for question sentence. Question mark is not used in indirect speech.

Examples.

Direct speech: He said to me, "do you like music?"

Indirect Speech: He asked me if I liked music. (Not, did I like music)

Or Indirect Speech: He asked me whether I liked music.

Direct speech: She said, "Will he participate in the quiz competition?"

Indirect Speech: She asked me if he would participate in quiz competition.

Direct speech: I said to him, "are you feeling well?"

Indirect Speech: I asked him if he was feeling well.

Direct speech: They said to me, "did u go to school?"

Indirect Speech: They asked me if I had gone to school.

Direct speech: He said to me, "Have you taken the breakfast?"

Indirect Speech: He asked me if I had taken the breakfast

Question which cannot be answered in YES/NO.

To change such questions into indirect speech, the words "if" or "whether" is not used. The tense of the question is changed according to the rules for change in normal tenses in indirect speech but sentence will not start with the auxiliary verb of the tense. The word "that" is not used between reporting verb and reported speech as conjunction, in indirect speech for question sentence. Question mark is not used in indirect speech.

Examples.

Direct speech: He said to me, "how are you?"

Indirect speech: He asked me how I was. (Not, how was I)

Direct speech: Teacher said to him, "what is your name?"

Indirect speech: Teacher asked him what his name was.

Direct speech: She said to him, "why did you come late?"

Indirect speech: She asked him why he had come late.

Direct speech: He said, "when will they come?"

Indirect speech: He asked when they would come.

Direct speech: She asked his son, "why are you crying?"

Indirect speech: She asked her son why he was crying.