

## up-to-date reporting

When we report someone's words a short time after they were said, the tenses can either change or remain the same in reported speech.

direct speech: 'I'm seeing the manager tomorrow,' Jack said to us.

reported speech: Jack told us (that) he is seeing/was seeing the manager tomorrow.

◆ Certain modal verbs change in reported speech as follows:

will/shall	→ would	can	→ could/would be able to (future reference)
may	→ might	must	→ must/had to (obligation)
can	→ could	shall	→ should (asking for advice)

◆ **Would, could, might, should, ought, had better and mustn't do not change in reported speech. Must does not change in reported speech when it expresses a logical assumption.**

direct speech	reported speech
He said, 'I'll have some tea.'	He said (that) he <b>would</b> have some tea.
He said, 'She can type fast.'	He said (that) she <b>could</b> type fast.
He said, 'I can talk to you tomorrow.'	He said (that) he <b>could/would be able to</b> talk to me the next day. (it refers to the future)
He said, 'They may come home.'	He said (that) they <b>might</b> come home.
He said, 'What shall I tell her?'	He asked what he <b>should</b> tell her.
He said, 'You must stay in.'	He said (that) I <b>must/had to</b> stay in.
He said, 'She must be exhausted.'	He said (that) she <b>must</b> be exhausted.

◆ In Type 1 conditionals tenses change in reported speech as follows: the present simple becomes past simple in the if-clause and will becomes would in the main clause.

direct speech: 'If I have the time, I'll come round,' Lisa said.

reported speech: Lisa said (that) if she had the time, she would come round.

◆ Type 2 and Type 3 conditionals do not change in reported speech.

direct speech: 'If she knew, she would help us,' Tony said.

reported speech: Tony said (that) if she knew, she would help us.

◆ The verb tenses and time expressions change in reported speech:

a) when reporting someone's words a long time after they were said (out-of-date reporting).

b) when we consider what the speaker says to be untrue.

direct speech: 'I like Shakespeare's plays a lot,' he said to us.

reported speech: He told us (that) he liked Shakespeare's plays a lot, but he didn't know the name of any.

◆ The verb tenses can either change or remain the same in reported speech:

a) when reporting someone's words a short time after they were said (up-to-date reporting).

b) when reporting a general truth or law of nature.

direct speech: 'The sun sets in the west,' the teacher said.

reported speech: The teacher said (that) the sun sets/set in the west.

◆ The verb tenses remain the same in reported speech:

When the introductory verb is in the present, future or present perfect.

direct speech: The singer says, 'I enjoy cycling.'

reported speech: The singer says (that) she enjoys cycling.

2

Fill in the gaps with the correct pronoun or possessive adjective.

- James said, 'My boss wants me to go to London tomorrow.'  
James said ...his... boss wanted ..... to go to London the following day.
- Mary said, 'I'm waiting for my son to come out of school.'  
Mary said that ..... was waiting for ..... son to come out of school.
- George said, 'I've bought a new car for my mum.'  
George said ..... had bought a new car for ..... mum.
- Julie said to me, 'I need you to help me with the shopping.'  
Julie told me that ..... needed ..... to help ..... with the shopping.
- John said, 'I'd like to take you out to dinner.'  
John said ..... 'd like to take ..... out to dinner.
- Helen said to Jane, 'I think your new haircut is lovely.'  
Helen told Jane that ..... thought ..... new haircut was lovely.

3

Turn the following sentences into reported speech.

- Robin said, 'These biscuits taste delicious.'  
...Robin said (that) the biscuits tasted delicious....
- 'I can't see you this afternoon because I've got a lot to do,' Ann told me.
- She came into the room holding some letters in her hand and said, 'I found these while I was tidying the desk drawers.'
- Fiona said, 'That picture was painted by my great-grandfather.'
- 'Those were good times for my family,' Jack said.
- 'I received a parcel this morning, but I haven't opened it yet,' Tom said.
- 'You mustn't do that again,' Mum said to Bob.
- 'These shoes are worn out. You'd better throw them away,' Mum said to me.

4

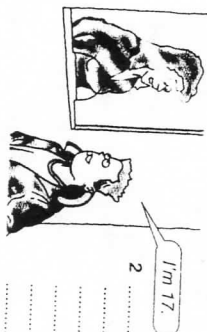
Turn the following sentences into reported speech.

- He said, 'I'm going to the station.'  
...He said (that) he was going to the station....
- Tina said, 'You should exercise regularly.'
- They said, 'We had booked the room before we left.'
- Tom said, 'This meal is delicious.'
- 'I've written you a letter,' she said to her friend.
- 'We've decided to spend our holidays in Jordan,' they told us.
- Jill said, 'I'll go to the bank tomorrow.'
- She said to him, 'We've been invited to a wedding.'
- She told me, 'You must leave early tomorrow.'
- 'They've gone out for the evening,' Jessie said to me.
- They said, 'We may visit Joe tonight.'
- She said, 'I can meet you on Tuesday.'
- Keith said, 'There is a letter for you on the table.'
- 'We won't be visiting Tom this evening,' Sam told us.
- Eric said, 'They had been talking on the phone for an hour before I interrupted them.'
- 'I haven't spoken to Mary since last week,' Gloria said.
- 'They delivered the letters this morning,' she said.
- He said, 'I'd like to buy this jumper.'
- 'They aren't going on holiday this year,' he said.
- Jane said, 'I haven't finished my homework yet.'
- 'I'm going to bed early tonight,' Caroline said.
- 'My mother is coming to visit us,' I said.
- 'We don't want to watch a film tonight,' the children said.
- 'He's playing in the garden now,' his mother said.
- She said, 'You must do your homework now.'

5 Look at the pictures and make sentences, as in the example.



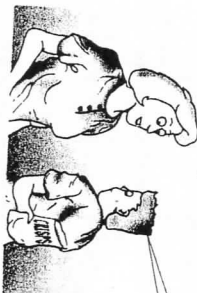
1 He said (that) he couldn't meet her because he was very busy.



3 I'm typing that report now.



4 I haven't eaten anything all day.



6 Turn the sentences into reported speech. In which of the following sentences do the tenses not change? In which do they not have to be changed? Why?

- The article says, 'The artist only uses oil paints.'  
... The article says (that) the artist only uses oil paints.
- The tenses do not change because the introductory verb is in the present simple.
- They are working hard today,' he said.
- I've done the things you asked me to do,' Mary said.
- The sun rises in the east,' she said.

7 Turn the following sentences into reported speech.

- 'Seaweed grows in the sea,' the teacher said to the students.  
... The teacher said to the student(s) (that) seaweed grows/grew in the sea.
- 'I saw Amanda at the cinema,' she said.  
(up-to-date reporting)
- 'They don't live here any more,' he said to me.  
(out-of-date reporting)
- 'Canada is a large country,' he said.
- 'The Statue of Liberty is in America,' she said to us.
- 'I'll help you with your homework,' he said.  
(out-of-date reporting)
- 'I would go on holiday if I had enough money,' Bill said.  
(up-to-date reporting)
- 'If I'm free, I'll call you,' Tom said.  
(up-to-date reporting)
- 'You should make a decision,' he said to us.
- 'You can ask John for advice,' she said.  
(up-to-date reporting)

Reported Questions



Yesterday, Eric had a job interview.  
The manager asked Eric if/whether he had had any experience.  
He also asked him why he wanted the job.

- Reported questions are usually introduced with the verbs ask, inquire, wonder or the expression want to know.
- When the direct question begins with a question word (who, where, how old, how long, when, why, what, etc.), the reported question is introduced with the same question word.  
e.g. 'What do you want to know?' She asked me.  
She asked me what I wanted to know.
- When the direct question begins with an auxiliary (is, do, have) or a modal verb (can, may, etc.), then the reported question begins with if or whether.  
e.g. 'Have you seen this man before?' he asked me.  
He asked me if/whether I had seen the man before.

In reported questions, the verb is in the affirmative. The question mark and words/expressions such as please, well, oh, etc. are omitted. The verb tenses, pronouns and time expressions change as in statements.  
e.g. 'Can you hold the door for me, please?' the man asked me.

The man asked me if/whether I could hold the door for him.  
Where are you going? Sam asked her.  
Sam asked her where she was going (NOT: Sam asked her where was she going?)

8 Turn the following into reported questions.

- 'Where do you live?' I asked her.  
... I asked her where she lived.
  - 'How old will you be on your next birthday?' he asked me.
  - 'Where is your umbrella?' she asked her daughter.
  - 'Do you like playing football?' John asked us.
  - The boss asked, 'What time are you going home today?'
  - 'Will you take the children to school today?' he asked.
  - 'Who called you today?' she asked.
  - 'When will you decorate the kitchen?' Martha asked.
  - 'Who broke my vase?' I asked.
  - Father asked, 'Will you help me lift these boxes, please?'
  - 'Can you speak a foreign language?' she asked her.
  - 'Where is the tourist information center?' we asked.
- 9 Yesterday, Marion met a couple who were on holiday in London. They were looking at a map. She asked them some questions. Turn them into reported questions.
- 'Are you lost?'  
... Marion asked them if/whether they were lost.
  - 'Can you speak English?'
  - 'Where are you from?'
  - 'Is your hotel near here?'
  - 'Where do you want to go?'
  - 'Were you looking for Big Ben?'
  - 'Have you been to the British Museum?'
  - 'Have you visited Buckingham Palace?'
  - 'Do you like London?'