

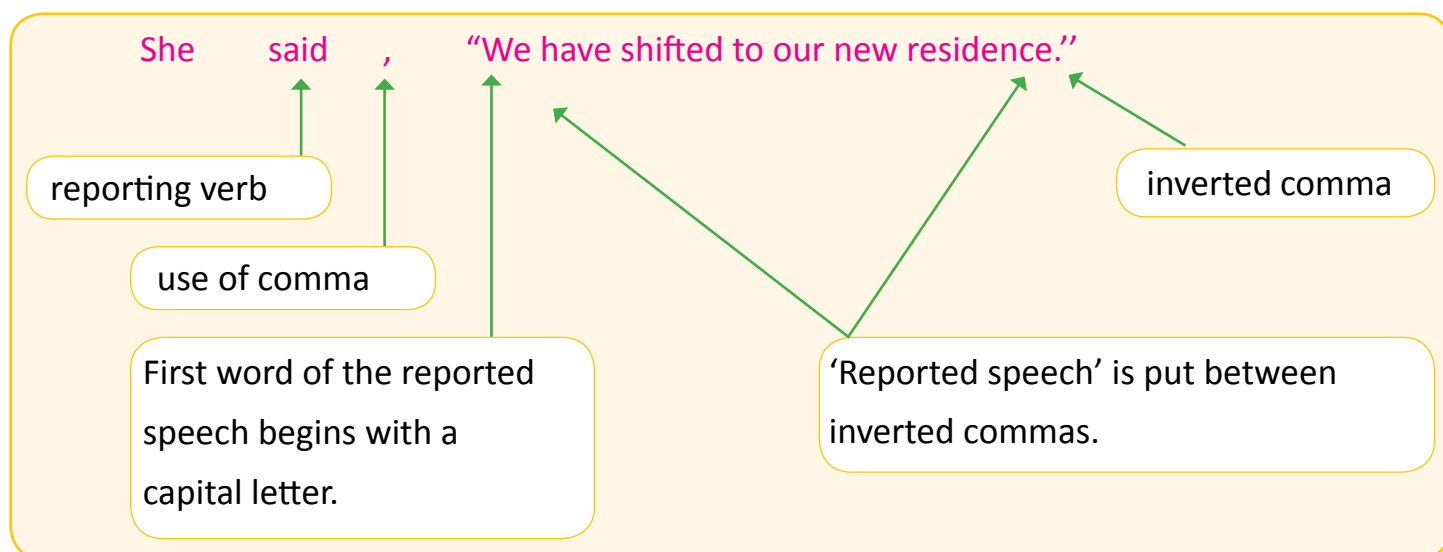
# Reported Speech

You can report or narrate the speech of another speaker in the following two ways:

- (i) Direct Speech
- (ii) Indirect Speech

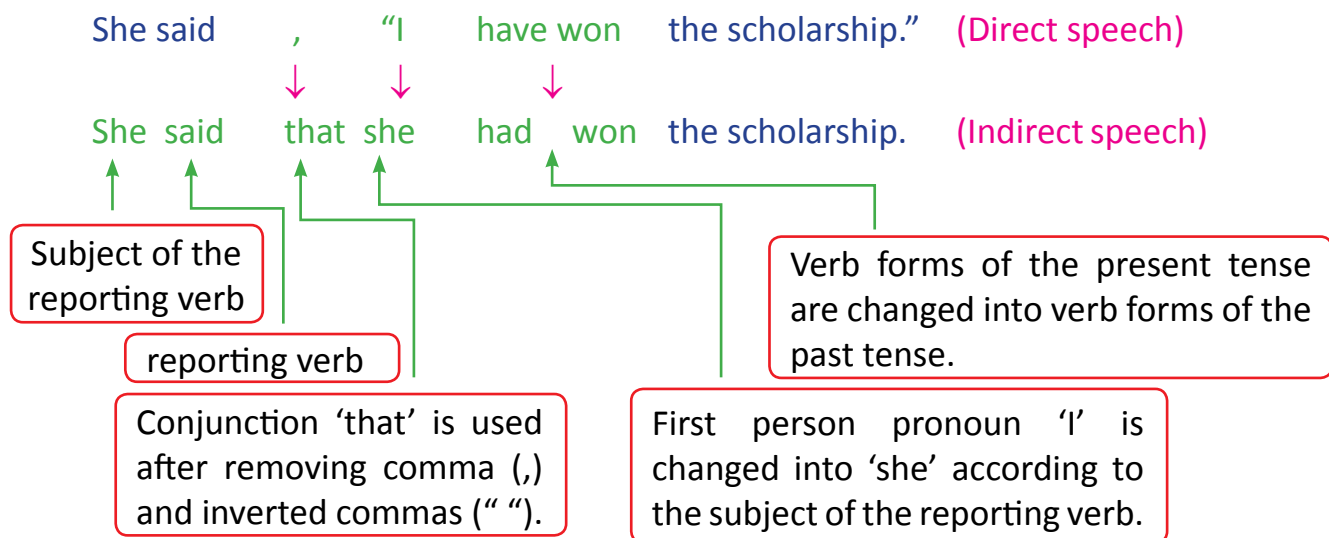
## 1. Direct Speech

The actual words used by the speaker are called direct speech; as,



## 2. Indirect Speech

Indirect speech or reported speech gives an account of something that someone has said, but without quoting the actual words that are used. Reported speech is usually introduced by a reporting verb such as 'say' or 'tell' followed by the word 'that'; as,



## Rules for Changing Direct Speech into Indirect Speech

1. If the 'reporting verb' is in the present or future tense, the tense of the 'reported speech' is not changed.

i. The teacher says, "Sumit is a good student." (Direct)

The teacher says that Sumit is a good student. (Indirect)

ii. Neha will say, "I have finished my homework." (Direct)

Neha will say that she has finished her homework. (Indirect)

2. If the 'reporting verb' is in the past tense, the tense of the 'reported speech' is also changed into the past tense.

A. All present tenses of the direct speech are changed into the corresponding past tenses; as,

Present Tenses of the Direct Speech	Corresponding Past Tenses of the Indirect Speech
Present Simple	Past Simple
Present Continuous	Past Continuous
Present Perfect	Past Perfect

i. She said, "I clean my room." (Direct)

She said that she cleaned her room. (Indirect)

ii. He said, "Her sister is going abroad." (Direct)

He said that her sister was going abroad. (Indirect)

iii. He said, "They have stood first in the examination." (Direct)

He said that they had stood first in the examination. (Indirect)

B. All past tenses of the direct speech are changed as follows:

Past Tenses of the Direct Speech	Changed Tenses of the Indirect Speech
Past Simple	Past Perfect
Past Continuous	Past Perfect Continuous
Past Perfect	—

i. My neighbour said, "The dog died in the night." (Direct)

My neighbour said that the dog had died in the night. (Indirect)

ii. My father said, "I was reading the newspaper." (Direct)

My father said that he had been reading the newspaper. (Indirect)

## Always Remember

*Past perfect tense of the direct speech is not changed in reported speech.*

C. All future tenses of the direct speech change their helping verbs as follows:

'Will' changes into - 'would'

'Shall' changes into - 'should/would' (would is more common)

### For example:

- i. She said, "I will cook lunch." (Direct)  
She said that she would cook lunch. (Indirect)
- ii. The students said, "We shall buy some books." (Direct)  
The students said that they would buy some books. (Indirect)

3. Modal verbs are changed as follows:

Modal Verbs used in the Direct Speech	Changed forms of Modal Verbs used in Indirect Speech
Can	Could
May	Might

## Always Remember

*The following modal verbs of direct speech do not change their forms in indirect speech:*

*would*

*should*

*could*

*might*

*must*

*have to*

*ought to*

*used to*

### For example:

- i. She said, "I can walk to school." (Direct)  
She said that she could walk to school. (Indirect)
- ii. He said, "It could rain today." (Direct)  
He said that it could rain that day. (Indirect)
- iii. They said, "We must respect our elders." (Direct)  
They said that they must respect their elders. (Indirect)

4. We change am/is/are into 'was/were'.

### For example:

- i. My father said, "Hari is a good painter." (Direct)

- My father said that Hari was a good painter. (Indirect)
- ii. He said, "I am a poet." (Direct)  
He said that he was a poet. (Indirect)
- iii. They said, "We are disappointed." (Direct)  
They said that they were disappointed." (Indirect)
5. We do not change the present simple tense of the reported speech if it expresses:
- a universal truth
  - a habitual action
  - a proverb

**For example:**

- The teacher said, "The moon revolves around the earth." (Direct)  
The teacher said that the moon revolves around the earth. (Indirect)  
[a universal truth]
- He said, "Donkeys bray." (Direct)  
He said that donkeys bray. (Indirect)  
[a habitual action]
- The man said, "A picture is worth a thousand words." (Direct)  
The man said that a picture is worth a thousand words. (Indirect)  
[a proverb]

**Rules for Changing Personal Pronouns**

- A. Pronouns of the first person are changed according to the subject of the reporting verb.

**For example:**

- She said, "I am fond of Chinese food." (Direct)  
She said that she was fond of Chinese food. (Indirect)

- B. Pronouns of the second person are changed according to the object of the reporting verb.

**For example:**

- She said to him, "You are an excellent cook." (Direct)  
She told him that he was an excellent cook. (Indirect)

- C. Pronouns of the third person are not changed.

**For example:**

- Ravi said, "He is an expert driver." (Direct)  
Ravi said that he was an expert driver. (Indirect)

- Words expressing 'nearness' in time or place are usually changed into words expressing 'distance':

Words Expressing Nearness	Words Expressing Distance
ago	before
here	there
last night/week	the previous night/week
next day/week	the following day/week
now	then
this	that
these	those
today	that day
tomorrow	the next day
tonight	that night
yesterday	the previous day

**For example:**

He said, "I am very happy to be here this morning." (Direct)  
 He said that he was very happy to be there that morning. (Indirect)

**Questions**

We make the following main changes while reporting questions:

- The reporting verb 'said' is changed into 'asked'.
- Use of connective word:
  - 'If' or 'whether' is used if the interrogative sentence begins with a verb.
  - Question word (what, where, when, why, how, etc.) is used if an interrogative sentence has a question word in its beginning.
- Interrogative form of the direct speech is changed into assertive form.
- Other rules remain the same as described earlier.

**For example:**

i. Aditi said to me, "Is your mother a doctor?" (Direct)  
 Aditi asked me if my mother was a doctor. (Indirect)

ii. He said to me, "What are you doing?" (Direct)  
 He asked me what I was doing. (Indirect)

**Commands and Requests**

Imperative sentences express commands and requests.

We make the following main changes while reporting imperative sentences:

1. The reporting verb 'said' is changed into-  

ordered		←	according to the sense expressed in the reported speech.
requested			
advised			
2. We put preposition 'to' before the base form (infinitive) in affirmative sentences.
3. We put 'not to' before the base form (infinitive) in negative sentences.

**For example:**

- |      |  |            |
|------|--|------------|
| i.   | The director said to the assistant, "Fix that meeting."            | (Direct)   |
|      | The director ordered the assistant to fix that meeting.            | (Indirect) |
| ii.  | The father said to his son, "Please help me with the dishes."      | (Direct)   |
|      | The father requested his son to help him with the dishes.          | (Indirect) |
| iii. | The doctor said to the patient, "Do not drink refrigerated water." | (Direct)   |
|      | The doctor advised the patient not to drink refrigerated water.    | (Indirect) |

**Exclamations**

While reporting exclamations, we generally keep in mind the following rules:

1. Reporting verb is changed into exclaimed, regretted, applauded, etc. according to the emotions expressed in the direct speech.
2. Exclamatory sentence is changed into assertive sentence.
3. Exclamation mark (!) is removed.
4. Other rules remain the same as described earlier.

**For example:**

- |      |   |            |
|------|---|------------|
| i.   | The tourist said, "What a beautiful monument the Taj Mahal is!"         | (Direct)   |
|      | The tourist exclaimed that the Taj Mahal was a very beautiful monument. | (Indirect) |
| ii.  | Ravi said, "How pretty she is!"   | (Direct)   |
|      | Ravi exclaimed that she was very pretty.                                | (Indirect) |
| iii. | He said, "Alas! She has passed away!"                                   | (Direct)   |
|      | He exclaimed with sorrow that she had passed away.                      | (Indirect) |
| iv.  | Manu said, "How foolish I was!"   | (Direct)   |
|      | Manu regretted that he was very foolish.                                | (Indirect) |
| v.   | The coach said, "Bravo! You have played well."                          | (Direct)   |
|      | The coach applauded them saying that they had played well.              | (Indirect) |