**REPORTED SPEECH**

1. **DIRECT AND INDIRECT SPEECH**

There are two ways of relating what a person has said: direct and indirect.

* + In direct speech, we repeat the original speaker’s exact words and place them between inverted commas plus a comma or colon placed immediately before the remark.

e.g. He said, “I have bought a new car.”

* + In indirect speech, we give the exact meaning of the remark or speech, without necessarily using the speaker’s exact words.

e.g. He said (that) he had bought a new car. (No comma after ’say’)

‘That’ can usually be omitted after ‘*say’* and *‘tell’ + object*. But it should be kept after other verbs.

**2.      STATEMENTS IN INDIRECT SPEECH: TENSE CHANGES**

When we turn direct speech into indirect, some changes are usually necessary.

* + When the introductory verb (say, tell, remark etc.) is in the present, present perfect or future, direct statements can be reported without any changes of tense.

e.g. He says, “the train will be late” = He says the train will be late.

* + But when the introductory verb is in the past tense, the following tense changes are necessary:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Direct speech** | **Indirect speech** |
| **Simple present**  “I never drink tea,” she replied | **Simple past**  She replied that she never drank tea |
| **Present continuous**  “I am looking for Amina,” she explained | **Past continuous**  She explained (that) she was looking for Amina |
| **Present perfect**  “I have found my bag”, she said | **Past perfect**  She said (that) she had found her bag |
| **Present perfect continuous**  He said, “I have been waiting for ages. | **Past perfect continuous**  He said he had been waiting for ages. |
| **Simple past**  “I bought it yesterday,” he said | **Past perfect**  He said he had bought it yesterday |
| **Future**  They said, “they will travel abroad” | **Conditional**  They said they would travel abroad |
| **Future continuous**  “I will/shall be using the car tomorrow,” She said. | **Conditional continuous**  She said she would be using the car tomorrow. |
| **Conditional**  She said, “I would/ should buy a car” | **Conditional**  She said she would/ should buy a car. (No tense change) |

**3. UNCHANGED TENSES**

* + In theory the past tense changes to the past perfect, but in spoken English it is often left unchanged.

e.g. Direct speech: He said, “Ann arrived on Monday”.

Indirect speech: He said (that) Ann arrived (had arrived) on Monday.

* + In written English past tenses do change to past perfect but there are some exceptions.

Past/ past continuous tenses used in time clauses do not normally change.

e.g. Direct speech: He said,” When we were living in Paris…”

Indirect speech: He said that when they were living in Paris….

The main verb of such sentences can either remain unchanged or become the past perfect.

e.g. Direct speech: He said, “when we were living /lived in Paris, we often saw Paul”

Indirect speech: He said that when they were living/ lived in Paris they often saw/ had seen Paul.

* + A past tense used to describe a state of affairs which still exists when the speech is reported remains unchanged.

e.g. Direct speech: She said, “I decided not to buy the house because it was on a main road”

Indirect speech: She said that she had decided not to buy the house it was on a main road.

* + Might, ought to, should, would, used to, could and must do not normally change In indirect speech.
  + Conditional sentences types 2 and 3 remain entirely unchanged.

**4. OTHER CHANGES WHEN TURNING DIRECT SPEECH INTO INDIRECT SPEECH**

* In indirect speech the conjunction ‘that’ can be placed immediately after the introductory verb. It can usually be omitted after *say, think* and *tell + object*, but it should be kept after other verbs such as complain, explain, shout, reply, etc.

e.g. I think (that) she is right.

She shouted that she was busy (Not ~~She shouted she was busy~~.)

* Pronouns and possessive adjectives normally change from first or second person to third person

e.g. Direct speech: Ali said, “I like my new house”

Indirect speech: Ali said he liked his new house.

This change does not occur when the speaker is reporting his own words.

e.g. Direct speech: I said, “I like my new house”

Indirect speech: I said that I liked my new house.

NB: Sometimes a noun must be inserted to avoid ambiguity.

e.g. Direct speech: Ahmed said,” He came in through the window”.

Indirect speech: Ahmed said that the man had come in through the window.

* Expressions of time change in indirect speech except when the speech is made and reported on the same day

e.g. Direct speech: “I saw her the day before yesterday,” he said.

Indirect speech: He said he had seen her two days before.

Direct speech: This morning he said, “I’ll be very busy today”

Indirect speech: This morning he said that he would be very busy today

The following table gives the change of some adverbs and adverbial phrases:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Direct speech | Indirect speech |
| Today  Yesterday  The day before yesterday  Tomorrow  The day after tomorrow  Next week/ year etc.  Last week/ year etc.  A week/ year etc. ago | That day  The day before  Two days before  The next day/ the following day  In two days’ time  The following week/ year etc.  The previous week/ year etc.  week/ year before/ the previous week/ year etc. |

***This*** is usually replaced by ***that*** when used in time expressions.

e.g. Direct speech: He told me, “I’ll come this week”

Indirect speech: He told me that he would come that week.

* ***Here*** is usually replaced by a phrase

e.g. Direct speech: He said, “You can sit here, Ali”

Indirect speech: He said to Ali that he could sit next to him.

***Here*** can be replaced by ***there*** when it is clear what place is meant.

e.g. Direct speech: At the café he said, “I’ll be here tomorrow”

Indirect speech: At the café he said that he would be there the next day.

**5. QUESTIONS IN INDIRECT SPEECH**

When direct questions are turned into indirect speech, in addition to the changes seen above occurring in statements, the following changes are necessary

* The interrogative form of the verb changes to the affirmative form and the question mark (?) is omitted.

e.g. Direct speech: “When did he travel to England?” he said

Indirect speech: He asked when he had travelled to England.

* If the introductory verb is say or tell, it must be changed to a verb of inquiry such as ask, inquire, wonder, want to know etc.

e.g. Direct speech: She said, “Where is the station?"

Indirect speech: She wondered where the station was.

* For *yes/ no questions* **if** or **whether** are used in indirect speech.

e.g. Direct speech: “Did you see the accident?” the policeman asked.

Indirect speech: The policeman asked if/ whether I had seen the accident.

**6. COMMANDS, REQUESTS, ADVICE IN INDIRECT SPEECH**

* In indirect speech commands, requests and advice are usually expressed by *a verb of command/ request/ advice + object + infinitive.*

e.g. Direct speech: “You had better hurry, Ali!” she said.

Indirect speech: She advised Ali to hurry.

* Negative commands, requests and advice are generally reported by *not + infinitive*.

e.g. Direct speech: “Don’t play far from the house, boys,” she said.

Indirect speech: She warned the boys not to play far from the house