**Reported Speech (Indirect Speech)**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Direct speech** | **Reported speech** |
| She says: "I like tuna fish." | She says that she likes tuna fish. |
| She said: "I'm visiting Paris next weekend" | She said that she was visiting Paris the following weekend. |

**A. Reporting Statements**

When transforming statements, check whether you have to change:

* pronouns, possessive adjective
* tense
* place and time expression

**1- Pronouns**

In reported speech, you often have to change the pronoun depending on who says what.

Example:

She says, “My dad likes roast chicken.” – She says that her dad likes roast chicken.

**2- Tenses**

* If the sentence starts in the present, there is ***no backshift*** of tenses in reported speech.
* If the sentence starts in the past, there is often ***backshift*** of tenses in reported speech.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Direct speech** | **Reported speech** |
| **(no backshift)** | “I **write** poems.” | He ***says*** that he **writes** poems. |
| **(backshift)** | “I **write** poems.” | He ***said*** that he **wrote** poems |

Example:  
He said, “I am happy.” – He said that he was happy.

**Examples of the main changes in tense:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Direct Speech** | **Reported Speech** |
| **Simple Present** He said: "I **am** happy" | Simple Past He said that he **was** happy |
| **Present Progressive** He said: "I**'m looking** for my keys" | **Past Progressive** He said that he **was looking** for his keys |
| **Simple Past** He said: "I **visited** New York last year" | **Past Perfect Simple** He said that he **had visited** New York the previous year. |
| **Present Perfect**  He said: " I**'ve lived** here for a long time " | **Past Perfect**  He said that he **had lived** there for a long time |
| **Past Perfect**  He said: "They **had finished** the work when I **arrived**" | **Past Perfect**  He said that they **had finished** the work when he **had arrived**" |
| **Past Progressive** He said: "I **was playing** football when the accident **occurred**" | **Past Perfect Progressive** He said that **he had been playing** football when the accident **had occurred** |
| **Present Perfect Progressive** He said:"I **have been playing** football for two hours." | **Past Perfect Progressive** He said that **he had been playing** football for two hours |
| **Past Perfect Progressive** He said: "I **had been reading** a newspaper when the light **went off**" | **Past Perfect Progressive** He said that he **had been reading** a newspaper when the light **had gone off** |
| **Future Simple (will+verb)** He said: "I **will open** the door." | **Conditional (would+verb)** He said that **he would open** the door. |
| **Conditional (would+verb)** He said: "I **would buy** Mercedes if I **were** rich" | **Conditional (would+verb)** He said that he **would buy** Mercedes if he **had been** rich" |

The modal verbs *could, should, would, might, needn't, ought to, used to* do not normally change.  
Example:  
He said, "She might be right." – He said that she might be right.

**Place, demonstratives and time expressions**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Direct Speech** | **Reported Speech** |
| **Time Expressions** | |
| today | that day |
| now | then |
| yesterday | the day before |
| … days ago | … days before |
| last week | the week before |
| next year | the following year |
| tomorrow | the next day / the following day |
| **Place** | |
| here | there |
| **Demonstratives** | |
| this | that |
| these | those |

**Reporting Questions**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Types of questions** | **Direct speech** | **Reported speech** |
| **With question word (what, why, where, how...)** | "Why" don’t you speak English?” | He asked me why I didn’t speak English. |
| **Without question word (yes or no questions)** | “Do you speak English?” | He asked me whether / if I spoke English. |

**Reporting requests / commands**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Direct speech** | **Reported speech** |
| “Nancy,do the exercise.“ | He told Nancy to do the exercise. |
| "Nancy, give me your pen, please." | He asked Nancy to give him her pen. |

|  |
| --- |
| Tenses are not relevant for requests – simply use *to*  / *not to* + verb (infinitive without "to |