

ENGLISH

Grammar: Direct and Indirect Speech



Direct and Indirect Speech

What is Direct and Indirect Speech?

The words of a speaker can be reported in two ways:

1. Using the direct words of the speaker
2. Reporting what the speaker said

Direct speech involves quoting the exact words of the speaker.

Indirect (Reported) speech is used to report what a person said.

Examples

Direct: Suraj said, "I don't like this hotel at all."

Indirect: Suraj said that he doesn't like that hotel at all.

Direct: Kevin said, "Please pass me a sheet of paper."

Indirect: Kevin requested someone to pass him a sheet of paper.

Direct: Lalit asked, "Why is Omi standing outside the class?"

Indirect: Lalit asked why Omi was standing outside the class.

- Use quotation marks to open and close direct speech.
- Place a comma before the quotation marks.

Rules for Changing Direct Speech into Indirect Speech

Tenses	
Direct Speech	Indirect Speech
Simple Present She said, "It's snowing."	Simple Past She said that it was snowing.
Present Continuous She said, "I'm teaching Geography."	Past Continuous She said that she was teaching Geography.
Present Perfect Continuous She said, "I've been teaching Geography for five years."	Past Perfect Continuous She said that she had been teaching Geography for five years.
Simple Past She said, "I taught quilling yesterday."	Past Perfect She said that she had taught quilling yesterday.
Past Continuous She said, "I was an athlete earlier."	Past Perfect Continuous She said that she had been an athlete earlier.
Past Perfect She said, "The workshop had already started when they arrived."	Past Perfect She said that the workshop had already started when they arrived.
Past Perfect Continuous She said, "I'd already been speaking for five minutes."	Past Perfect Continuous She said that she'd already been speaking for five minutes.

- Use the present tense in indirect speech to report facts and universal truths.
 - **Direct Speech:** "My name is Soham," he said.
 - **Indirect Speech:** He said that his name is Soham.
- Use the present tense to report a future event in indirect speech.
 - **Direct Speech:** "Next week's session is on time management," she said.
 - **Indirect Speech:** She said next week's session will be on anger management.

Rules for Changing Modal Auxiliaries in Indirect Speech

Modals	
Direct Speech	Indirect Speech
will She said, "I will buy groceries tomorrow."	would She said that she would buy grocery tomorrow.
can She said, "I can donate books online."	could She said that she could donate books online.
must She said, "I must have a library for the children."	had to She said that she had to have a library for the children.
shall She said, "What shall we make today?"	should She asked what we should make today.
may She said, "May I start on a new page?"	might She asked if she might start on a new page.
There is no change to could , would , should , might and ought to .	

Rules for Changing Expressions of Time

Direct Speech	Indirect Speech
this (evening)	that (evening)
Kamal said, "Can we meet this evening?"	Kamal asked if they could meet <u>that evening</u> .
today	that(very) day
The teacher said, "I need the assignment <u>today</u> ."	The teacher said that she needed the assignment <u>that very day</u> .
yesterday	day before/previous day
"Didn't I warn you <u>yesterday</u> ?" said the boss.	The boss asked whether or not he warned him <u>the day before</u> .
these (days)	those (days)
Phillip sighed, "There is no sense of honour <u>these days</u> ."	Phillip sighed that there was no sense of honour <u>those days</u> .
(a week) ago/ last week	(a week) before
Jigar said, "I called you a week ago."	Jigar stated that he called me a week before.
last weekend	previous weekend
Meena said, "We went out <u>last weekend</u> ."	Meena said that they went out the <u>previous weekend</u> .
here	there
Bob said, "Stand <u>here</u> !"	Bob ordered him to stand <u>there</u> .

Direct Speech	Indirect Speech
next (week)	following (week)
They asked me, "Can you join us <u>next week</u> ?"	They asked me if I could join them <u>the following week</u> ,
tomorrow	next/following day
"Let us go to the park <u>tomorrow</u> " said my friend.	My friend proposed that we go to the park <u>the next day</u> .

Direct to Indirect Speech – Types of Sentences

The reporting verb 'said' is changed according to the following rules from direct to indirect speech.

Declarative Sentences

The reporting verb **said** may change to **replied**, **answered**, **informed**, **warned**, **stated**, **mentioned** or **explained**.

Interrogative Sentences

Said may change to **asked**.

Imperative Sentences

Said may change to

- ☐ **ordered**, **commanded** or **told** for **commands**
- ☐ **asked**, **requested**, **pleaded** or **begged** for **requests**
- ☐ **suggested**, **urged**, **forbade**, **warned** or **advised** for **suggestions**

Exclamatory Sentences

Said may change to **exclaimed with joy/sorrow/delight/anger/fear/surprise** depending on the emotions conveyed.

A direct narration expressing wish or prayer:

Said may change to **wished**, **prayed**, **blessed** or **cursed** based on what needs to be conveyed.

Examples

Direct Speech: Soniya said, "I am going to visit grandma next week."

Indirect Speech: Soniya said that she was going to visit grandma the following week.

Direct Speech: Jalpa said, "Amit, please give my pencil box back."

Indirect Speech: Jalpa requested Amit to give her pencil box back.

Direct Speech: Mother said to me, "What will you eat for dinner? Buy some fresh vegetables on your way back home."

Indirect Speech: Mother asked me what I would eat for dinner and asked me to buy some fresh vegetables on my way back home.

Direct Speech: Noorie said, "Tejal, what have you brought for lunch?"

Indirect Speech: Noorie asked Tejal what she had brought for lunch.

Direct Speech: Jeevan asked Nitin, "Where are you going for vacation? Nitin said, "I am going to Sikkim."

Indirect Speech: Jeevan asked Nitin where he was going for vacation. Nitin replied that he was going to Sikkim.

Direct Speech: Jatin said, "I hope Sunil recovers soon from his illness."

Indirect Speech: Jatin wished that Sunil might recover soon from his illness.

Direct Speech: The teacher said to the students, "You will be taken to the laboratory after five minutes for your practical exam."

Indirect Speech: The teacher told the students that they would be taken to the laboratory after five minutes for their practical exam.

Direct Speech: "Excuse me. Do you know the way to the ticket counter?" the tourist asked Chetan. Chetan said, "Yes. First take the escalator and then the first right."

Indirect Speech: The tourist asked Chetan if he knew the way to the ticket counter. Chetan told him to take the escalator and then the first right.

Direct Speech: Mahesh told Namrata, "I have signed a new contract."

Indirect Speech: Mahesh told Namrata that he had signed a new contract.