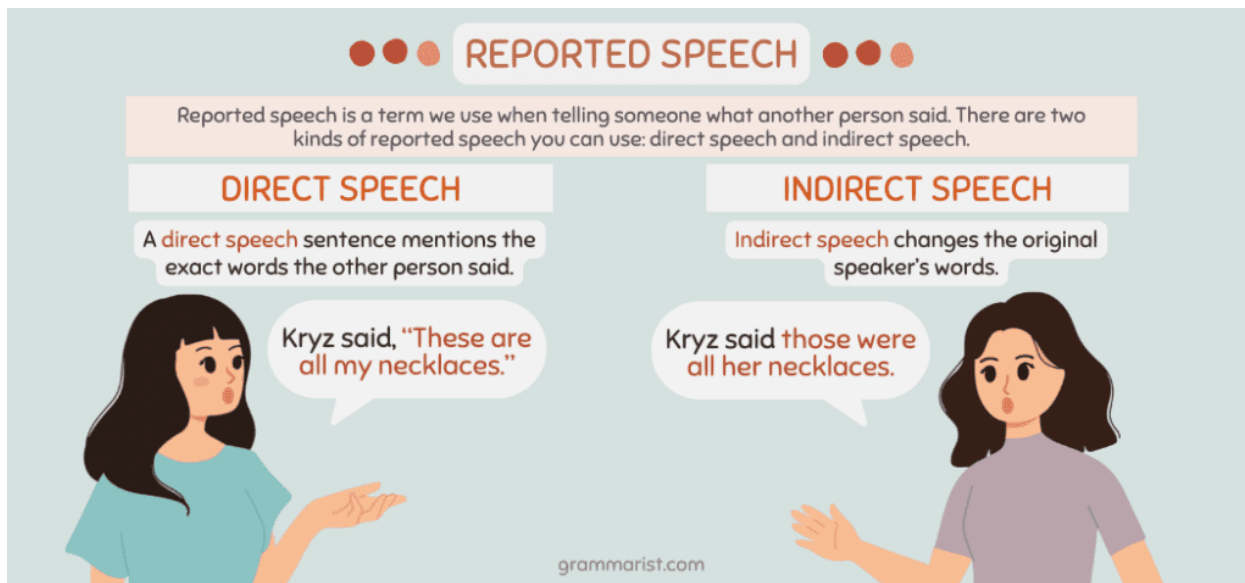


COMMUNICATIVE GRAMMAR

February 2026



Forming reported speech

1. In reported speech we usually report what was said at a different time, and so we change the tense to reflect the time which we are reporting. We normally “shift back” one tense.
 - Direct speech: “I’m not playing football.”
Reported later: “He said that he wasn’t playing football.”
2. Sometimes the pronoun needs to be changed.
 - Direct speech: Jane: “I don’t like living here.” (*Jane is referring to herself*)
Reported speech: Jane said (that) she didn’t like living here. (*The pronoun **she** refers to **Jane***)
3. Other words about place and time may also need to be changed.
 - Direct speech: “I like **this** car.”
Reported speech: He said (that) he liked **that** car.
 - Direct speech: “I went to Tokyo **last week**.”
Reported speech: She said (that) she’d been to Tokyo **the week before**.

Meaning

We use reported speech to tell someone what another person said:

Jim says to you:

“I don’t feel well.”

“I can’t drive.”

“My parents have gone on holiday.”

“I’m going out now so you will have to wait until I get back.”

“I’ll help you.”

Later, you tell your friend what Jim said:

Jim said (that) **he didn't** feel well.

He said (that) **he couldn't** drive.

He said (that) **his parents had gone** on holiday.

He said (that) **he was going out** now so I **would** have to wait until he **got** back.

He said that **he would** help me.

Additional points

1. If we report something which is still true, it is not necessary to change the verb.
 - Direct speech: "My car **is** bigger than yours."
 - Reported speech: He said his car **is/was** bigger than mine.
2. When we are reporting past tenses and we see the events from the same viewpoint as the original speaker, it is not necessary to change the tense.
 - Direct speech: "The earthquake **happened** at half past seven."
 - Reported speech: The radio said that the earthquake **happened** at half past seven.
3. Modal verbs *could, might, would, should, ought, had better* usually do not change in reported speech.
 - Direct speech: "I **should** go to the dentist."
 - Reported speech: He said that he **should** go to the dentist.

Direct and Indirect Speech			
Direct Speech		Indirect Speech	
Direct speech is when we quote the exact words spoken by someone, inside quotation marks.		Indirect speech (also called reported speech) is when we report what someone said, but we don't use their exact words.	
Example: "Can you help me with this homework?" asked Ahmed.		Example: Ahmed asked if I could help him with his homework.	
The speaker's exact words are inside quotation marks.		The speaker's words are not quoted. Extra words or phrases may be added.	
The tense is not changed, but the pronouns and time words are changed to fit the context.		The tense is not changed, but the pronouns and time words are changed to fit the context.	
Rule	Description	Direct Speech	Indirect Speech
1. Change of Pronouns	Pronouns change to match the speaker.	She said, "I am happy."	She said that she was happy.
2. Change of Tense	Present tense changes to past tense.	He said, "I like apples."	He said that he liked apples.
3. Change of Time Words	Time words shift to fit context.	She said, "I will go tomorrow."	She said that she would go the next day.
4. Questions	Questions change to statements.	He asked, "Are you ready?"	He asked if I was ready.
5. Commands/Requests	Commands become requests/statements.	She said, "Please sit down."	She asked me to sit down.

Beyond the basic grammar rules, reported speech features several fascinating quirks:

1. The "Backshift" Effect

When recounting past conversations, we generally shift verbs one step further into the past (e.g., Present Simple becomes Past Simple). However, if a sentence is already in the Past Perfect tense, it is impossible to shift it further back, so it stays exactly the same.

2. Universal Truths Ignore the Rules

If the statement being reported is universally true or still relevant, changing the tense is optional.

- Example: If someone says, "*The sun rises in the east,*" you can report it as, "*She said that the sun rises in the east,*" because the sun is still rising in the east.

3. "That" is Optional

The word "that" is often used to connect the reporting clause to the reported clause (e.g., "*He said that he was leaving*"), but it can be omitted entirely without changing the meaning.

4. Pronoun and Place Shifting

Because you are retelling a story from a different perspective, pronouns and location words must change.

- Example: Direct speech: "*I love this city,*" becomes "*He said he loved that city.*"

5. Time Travel Words

Time words must be adjusted to match the context of when the quote is being retold.

- "*Tomorrow*" becomes "*the next day*" or "*the following day*".
- "*Yesterday*" becomes "*the day before*".

Студенты группы Ло-13

funny direct speech



1. She said that she was going to write a novel and get rich.
2. Her mother said that was great but she would need a day job.
3. She replied that all she had to do was come up with an amazing story.
4. Her grandmother insisted that she didn't quit her day job.
5. She added that then she would wait for the publishers' bidding war to begin.
6. She asked whether they didn't have any other advice.
7. Her grandmother told her to write what she knew, not to use anyone's real name and not to quit her day job.
8. She murmured that once upon a time a beautiful girl had lived with her cynical, dream-crushing mother and grandma.
9. Her sister told her not to forget the often overlooked but incredibly clever little sister.