

Statements in indirect speech : tense changes necessary

Introduced by present tense verb:

Indirect speech can be introduced by a verb in a present tense: *he says that...* this is usual when we are:

- Reporting a conversation.
- Reading a letter and reporting what it says.
- Reading instructions and reporting them.
- Reporting a statement that someone makes very often, e.g. *Tom says that he'll never get married.*

When the introductory verb is in the **present, present perfect or future tense** we can report the direct speech without any change of tense

Introduced by past tense verb:

But indirect speech is usually introduced by a verb in the past tense.

Verbs in the direct speech have then **to be changed** into a corresponding **past tense**. The changes are shown in the following table. (The "that" has been omitted in the last five examples)

<i>Direct speech</i>	<i>Indirect speech</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>Simple present:</u> "I never eat meat," he explained. ▪ <u>Present continuous:</u> "I'm waiting for Ann" he said. ▪ <u>Present perfect:</u> "I've found a flat" he said. ▪ <u>Present perfect continuous:</u> He said, "I've been waiting for ages" ▪ <u>Simple past:</u> "I took it home with me" he said. ▪ <u>Future:</u> "I will/shall be in Paris on Monday." He said ▪ <u>Future continuous:</u> "I will/shall be using the car myself on the 24th," he said ▪ <u>But note, Conditional</u> I said, "I would/should like to see it." 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>Simple past:</u> He explained that he never ate meat. ▪ <u>Past continuous:</u> He said (that) he was waiting for Ann. ▪ <u>Past perfect:</u> He said (that) he had found a flat. ▪ <u>Past perfect continuous:</u> He said he had been waiting for ages. ▪ <u>Past perfect:</u> She said she had taken it home with her. ▪ <u>Conditional:</u> He said he would be in Paris on Monday. ▪ <u>Future continuous:</u> He said he'd be using the car herself on 24th. ▪ <u>Conditional:</u> I said I would/should like to see it.

➤ Expression of time & place

○ *Direct*

Today

Yesterday

The day before yesterday

Tomorrow

indirect

that day

the day before

two days before

the next/following day

The day after tomorrow	in two days time
Next week/day/year...	the following week/year...
Last week/year...	the previous week/year...
A week/year ago	a year before/the previous year.
Now	then /that time

➤ **Modals:**

<u>Direct</u>	<u>indirect</u>
Can	could
May	might
Must	had to
Shall	should
Will	would

➤ **Demonstratives:**

This	that
These	those
Here	there

Practicing:

A. Put the following into indirect speech using the given reporting verbs.

- "We don't like his attitude" (say)
- "I'm not competent to give advice on this subject" (claim)
- "Please tell us the latest news that you have heard" (request)
- "Will you have supper with us after the performance tonight" (wonder)

B. Put these statements using introductory verbs in the past.

- "I have no reason not to believe you"
- "I'll pay a hundred and fifty"
- "She's been crying till she's half blind" her mother reports
- "Don't go too deep into the water" she told her children
- "They lie and steal and have to be watched all the time" she noted
- "I'm looking for sunny side cottage. I don't suppose you've heard of it"
- "Don't leave me here alone"
- "I shall never claim of any trouble to you"
- "Mrs. Joe has been out a dozen times, looking for you, Pip". "And she is out now"