



Unit 4

Reported speech

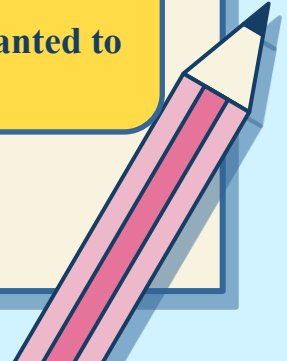


Indirect speech : why things change

Look at the text , and write down all the words and expressions that are different in Bill's and Peter's sentences.

BILL (on Saturday evening) : 'I don't like this party. I want to go home now.'

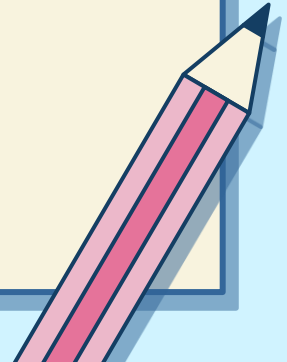
PETER (on Sunday morning) : 'Bill said that he didn't like the party. and he wanted to go home right away.'



Indirect speech : why things change

2. Which do you think is the best explanation for the differences?

- 1. After verbs like said, you change tenses and pronouns in English.**
- 2. The time, place and speakers are different.**
- 3. If the main verb is past, the other verbs have to be past too.**



Indirect speech : 'here' and 'now'

Some words may be changed in indirect speech, because the original speaker's 'here' and 'now' are not the same as the reporter's.

1. The following sentence was said in England in November 1994:

'I've been in this part of the world since March this year.'

Does the first or second 'this' have to be changed if the sentence is reported:

a. in England a week later?

c. in Holland a week later?

b. in England a year later?

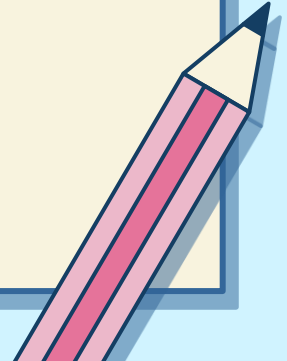
d. in Holland a year later?

a. neither has to be changed.

c. the 1st this has to be changed.

b. the 2nd 'this' has to be changed.

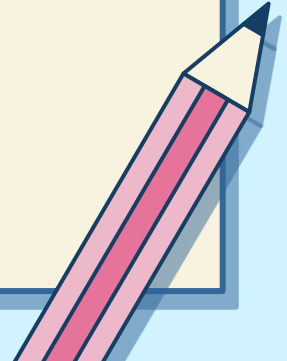
d. both have to be changed.



Indirect speech : 'here' and 'now'

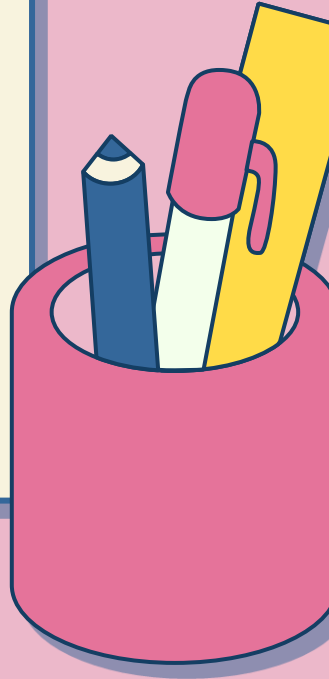
2. Match the direct and indirect speech expressions. Example:

DIRECT SPEECH:	INDIRECT SPEECH:
here	- there
last week	- the week before
next week	- the next week/the week after
now	- then/that day/right away
this	- that/the/last
this morning	- that morning
today	- that day
tomorrow	- the next day
tonight	- that night
yesterday	- the day before



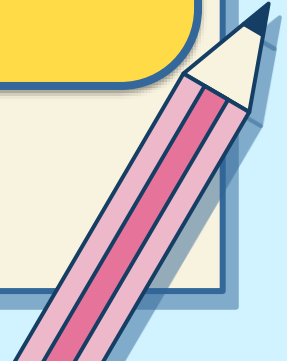
3. Imagine these sentences were reported in another place a month later. Put in the 'here' and 'now' words.

- 3.1 'I'll see you tomorrow.' She said she'd see me the next day.
- 3.2 'I'll phone you this evening.' He said he'd phone that evening.
- 3.3 'Do you like it here?' She asked if I liked it there.
- 3.4 'My uncle died last week.' He told me his uncle had died the week before.
- 3.5 'This meat tastes funny.' She said the meat tasted funny.
- 3.6 'I'm leaving now.' He told us he was leaving then / right away.
- 3.7 'I overslept this morning.' She told him she'd overslept that morning.
- 3.8 'The train leaves at 11.00 tonight.' I was told the train left at 11.00 that night.
- 3.9 'Pete phoned me yesterday.' He said Pete had phoned him the day before.
- 3.10 'My brother's arriving here today.' She said her brother was arriving that day.

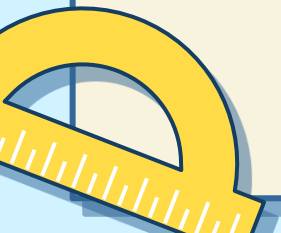


indirect speech : tenses

After reporting expressions like he said, I asked, she thought, tenses are usually different from those in the original words (because the reporter' time is different from the original speaker's time). Verbs become more past.



ORIGINAL WORDS (DIRECT SPEECH)	REPORTED WORDS (INDIRECT SPEECH)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>You look nice.</i>• <i>I can't swim.</i>• <i>I'm learning French.</i>• <i>Has he forgotten?</i>• <i>John phoned.</i>• <i>Will you marry me?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>I told her she looked nice.</i> (NOT <i>I told her she looks nice.</i>)• <i>He pretended he couldn't swim.</i>• <i>She said she was learning French.</i>• <i>I wondered if he had forgotten.</i>• <i>She told me that John had phoned.</i>• <i>I asked him if he would marry me.</i> (NOT ... <i>if he will marry me.</i>)



EXERCISE

1. Complete the table.

DIRECT SPEECH	INDIRECT SPEECH
simple present past
.. present progressive ..	past progressive
present perfect past perfect
simple past past perfect
..... will	would

2. Complete the reported sentences with the correct tenses.

2.1 'I'm tired.' She said she tired.

2.2 'You play very well.' He told me I very well.

2.3 'Can you help us?' They asked if I help them.

2.4. 'We're leaving.' They told us they

2.5 'She hasn't brushed her hair.' I noticed that she her hair.

2.6 'John's had an accident.' Pam rang to say that John.....an accident.

2. Complete the reported sentences with the correct tenses.

2.7 'I left school at fifteen. Her letter said that she **had left** school at fifteen.

2.8 'She won't say anything.' I knew she **wouldn't say** anything.

2.9 'Nobody will know.' I thought nobody **would know**.

2.10 'This letter has been opened.' I could see that the letter **had been opened**.

3. Put in the right tenses.

I had a really funny evening yesterday, Mary. I got talking to this boy in the pub, very nice-looking he was, and I could see he 1. **fancied** ... me. He said he 2. **had never met** ... anybody like me before, and he felt I 3. **had** ... a very unusual kind of beauty. Oh, yes? I said. Then he asked me if I 4. **wanted** ... a lift home, so I said no, I 5. **was** ... hungry, so we went out for a curry.

I asked him what he 6.....**did**..... for a living, and he said he 7.**was doing**.. some undercover work for the CIA at the moment. He said he 8.**could not**..... give me his address because he 9.**moved / was moving**..... around all the time. So I asked him why he 10.**thought**..... I 11.**wanted**..... his address. Then he asked if he 12.**could**..... have my phone number. He said he 13.**would call**..... me to day to fix for me to go to America with him. So I asked him why he 14.**wanted**..... to take me to America, and he said he 15.**thought**..... he 16.**was falling**..... in love with me.

I knew he 17. **was lying**..., but it was kind of fun. Anyway, I told him I 18. **had**... got a boyfriend already, but he said that 19. **didn't matter**. We 20. **were**... meant for each other, he said, and nobody 21. **was going**... to stand in our way, because our lives 22. **were**... written in the stars.

Then he borrowed £20 from me to pay the bill because he said he 23. **had left**... his wallet at home, and he went off to the toilet, and I never saw him again.

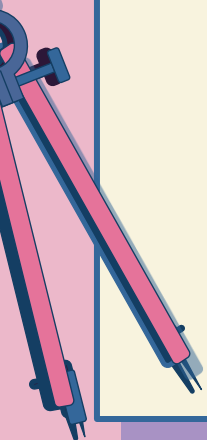
Tenses don't change after present or future reporting verbs, because there is no important change of time.

-He **says** he **doesn't** want to play any more. ('I **don't** want...')

-I'll **tell** her your idea **is** great.

Tenses do not usually change after present perfect reporting verbs, either.

-The government **has announced** that taxes **will be** raised.



indirect speech: present situations

Situations that have not changed : if the original speaker was talking about a **present or future situation that is still present or future** when the words are reported, **the tenses may not change** after a past reporting verb.

(DIRECT SPEECH)	(INDIRECT SPEECH)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The earth is round.• 'How old are you?' 'What?'• Where does she work?• It will be windy tomorrow.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• He proved that the earth is / was round.• 'I asked how old you are / were.'• I've often wondered where she works/worked.• They said it will / would be windy tomorrow.

1. Imagine these sentences were reported soon after they were said

change them to indirect speech in two different ways.

1.1 What day is it?

I asked what day it is. **I asked what day it was.**

1.2 What's the dark-haired child's name? (I asked)

I asked what the dark-haired child's name is/was.

1.3 I'm utterly fed up! (Are you deaf? I said)

Are you deaf? I said I'm / I was utterly fed up.

1.4 It's raining. (I told you)

I told you it's / it was raining......

1.5 You'll get your money. (I said)

I said you will / you would get your money......

1.6 The weather is changing. (This article I was reading said)

This article I was reading said the weather is / was changing......

1.7 The repairs will cost £ 5,000. (Al told me)

Al told me the repairs will / would cost £5,000......

1.8 Is Jane coming to see us? (I asked)

I asked if Jane is / was coming to see us......

1.9 You're going to the north. (Pat told me that)

Pat told me that you are / you were going to the north......

1.10 You won't pass your exam. (I bet George £5 yesterday that)

I bet George £5 yesterday that you won't / wouldn't pass your exam......

We do not keep the original speaker's tenses if we do not agree with what he/she said, or if we want to show that the ideas do not come from us.

- They were certain that the gods **lived** in the sky.
- Did you hear that? She said she **was** fourteen!
- He announced that profits **were** higher than forecast.
- I didn't know she **was** ill.

indirect speech: questions

*****Indirect questions normally have the subject before the verb.**

He wanted to know when **I could start**. (NOT ... ~~when could I start~~.)
I asked where **the president and his wife were staying**.

Do is not used in indirect questions, and question marks are not used.
I wondered how **they felt**. (NOT ... ~~how did they feel?~~)

The same structure is used to report the answers to questions.
I **knew how they felt**.
Nobody told me **why I had to sign the paper**.

1. Turn these into indirect questions, beginning *I asked*.

1.1 What's Peter's address?

I asked what Peter's address was......

1.2 When's the new manager coming?

I asked when the new manager was coming......

1.3 How does she know my name?

I asked how she knew my name......

1.4 Why are all the windows open?

I asked why all the windows were open.
.....

1.5 How many books does he want?

I asked how many books he wanted.
.....

1.6 Where do they keep the money?

I ask where they kept the money.
.....

1.7 What time is the meeting?

I asked what time the meeting was.
.....

1.8 When does the last train leave?

I asked when the last train left......

1.9 How does the photocopier work?

I asked how the photocopier worked......

1.10 How often does Ann go shopping?

I asked how often Ann went shopping......

Yes/no questions are reported with **if** or **whether**.

-The driver asked **if / whether** I wanted the town centre.

We prefer **whether** before **or**, especially in a formal style.

-I enquired **whether** she was coming by road **or** by air.

2. Turn these into indirect questions, beginning I wondered.

2.1 Do they like me?

..I wondered if/whether they liked me.....

2.2 Will I be ready in time?

..I wondered if / whether I would be ready in time.....

2.3 Is there any food in the house?

..I wondered. if / whether there was any food in the house.....

2.4 Is service included or not?

..I wondered if / whether service was included or not.....

2.5 Can I pay by cheque?

..I wondered if / whether I could pay by cheque.....

2. Turn these into indirect questions, beginning I wondered.

2.6 Does my hair look funny?

I wondered if / whether my hair looked funny......

2.7 Has the postman been?

I wondered if / whether the postman had been......

2.8 Do they speak English?

I wondered if / whether they spoke English......

2.9 Am I doing the right thing?

I wondered if / whether I was doing the right thing......

2.10 Is the meeting on Tuesday or Wednesday?

I wondered if / whether the meeting was on Tuesday or Wednesday......

indirect speech: infinitives

We use **infinitives** to report sentences about future actions – for example **promises, agreements, orders, offers, advice, suggestions, requests.**

- He promised **to write**.
- She agreed **to wait** for me.
- I told Andrew **to be** careful.
- Ann has offered **to baby-sit** tonight.
- I advise you **to think** again.
- She asked us **not to be** late.

The structure question **word + infinitive** is common.

- He asked her **how to make** a white sauce.
- Don't tell me **what to do**.

1. Change the sentences as shown.

1.1 I won't tell anybody. (He promised)

He promised not to tell anybody.

.....

1.2 I'll cook supper. (She offered)

She offered to cook supper.

.....

1.3 Leave early. (He advised me)

He advised me to leave early.

.....

1.4 Please close the door. (She asked me)

She asked me to close the door.

.....

1.5 I'll stop smoking. (She promised)

She promised to stop smoking.

.....

1.6 Why don't I do the shopping? (He offered)

He offered to do the shopping.

.....

1.7 You ought to tell the police. (She advised me)

She advised me to tell the police.

.....

1.8 Wait outside. (I told her)

I told her to wait outside.

.....

1.9 OK, I'll pay half. (He agreed)

He agreed to pay half.

.....

1.10 Park round the corner. (She told me)

.....**She told me to park around the corner.**.....

1.11 How do I find the house? (I asked him)

.....**I asked him how to find the house.**.....

1.12 Phone me before nine. (She told me when)

.....**She told me when to phone.**.....

1.13 Say you're ill. (I told him what)

.....**I told him what to say.**.....

1.14 We'll pay for the tickets. (We offered)

.....**We offered to pay for the tickets.**.....

This structure is **not** used after **suggest** or **say**.

He **suggested trying** somewhere else. (NOT ~~He suggested to try...~~)

The policeman **said I musn't** park there. (NOT ...~~said me not to park...~~)

tell and say

Tell and **say** are similar.
but there are **differences**.
Look at the examples and
try to see what they are.

Tell can be used without a
personal object in a few
expressions like tell a lie, tell
the truth, tell a story, tell the
time.

tell and say

- I told the assistant that I wanted size 8. (NOT I told that I wanted size 8.)
- I said that I wanted size 8.
- I said to the assistant that I wanted size 8. (NOT I said the assistant that ...)
- I said to her 'What are you doing?' (NOT I told her 'What are you doing?')
- I said 'hello'. (NOT I told him hello.)
- I told him to hurry up. (NOT I said him to hurry up.)

1. Choose the correct forms of the rules. Check them in the key.

- 1.1 After (say / tell) we normally say who is spoken to. We do not put 'to' before the object.
- 1.2 After (say / tell), we don't have to say who is spoken to. If we do, we put 'to' before the object.
- 1.3 (Say / Tell) means 'inform' or 'instruct'. It can't introduce questions.
- 1.4 (Say / Tell) can't normally be used before an infinitive.

2. Put in the correct forms of say or tell.

2.1 I **said** that I wasn't ready.

2.2 **Tell** me what you need.

2.3 Have you **told** the doctor about it?

2.4 Did you **say** something to me?

2.5 He doesn't **tell** me anything.

2.6 Mary **told** her mother she was going to the office.

2.7 Why didn't she **say** goodbye?

2.8 **Tell** him to be quiet.

2.9 Who **said** that?

2.10 **Say** that you won't forget me.

Indirect speech: special cases

Past tenses are changed to **past perfect** tenses after past reporting verbs, but only if this is necessary in order to make the time relations clear. Compare:

DIRECT SPEECH	INDIRECT SPEECH
<ul style="list-style-type: none">I saw Penny a couple of days ago.Dinosaurs were around for 250 million years.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">In his letter, he said he'd seen Penny a couple of days before.This guy TV said dinosaurs were around for 250 million years.

1. Change these to indirect speech.

1.1 I saw him once before in London. (I knew)

..I knew that I had seen him once before in London.

1.2 Shakespeare didn't speak French. (The professor said)

..The professor said Shakespeare didn't speak French.

1.3 He died two years ago. (When I got there, I found out)

..When I got there I found out that he had died two years before.

1.4 Three thousand years ago there were tigers in England. (It said on this TV programme)

..It said on this TV programme that three thousand years ago there were tigers
..in England.

Usually unchanged after past reporting verbs: past perfect, had better, would, could, should, ought, might, must.

DIRECT SPEECH	INDIRECT SPEECH
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>I hadn't seen him before.</i>• <i>You'd better go.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>She said she hadn't seen him before.</i>• <i>He said I'd better go.</i>

2. Chang these to indirect speech.

2.1 Would you like a drink? (She asked me)

She asked me if I would like a drink.

.....

2.2 I couldn't help it. (I said)

I said that I couldn't help it.

.....

2.3 We should be home about six. (They thought)

They thought we should be home about six.

.....

2.4 It might rain. (The forecast said)

The forecast said (that) it might rain.

.....

2.5 She must be joking. (Everybody said)

Everybody said she must be joking.

.....

2.6 I hadn't seen the notice. (I explained)

I explained I hadn't seen the notice.

.....

revision of indirect speech

1. Change these sentences to indirect speech (reported some time later).

1.1 He's ill. (She thought)

She thought he was ill.

.....

1.2 I'll be back tomorrow. (He said)

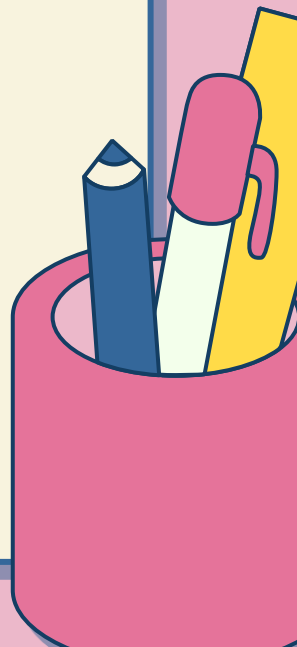
He said he would be back the next day.

.....

1.3 I don't like this music. (She said)

She said she didn't like that music.

.....



1.4 Where's the bus station? (She asked me)

She asked me where the bus station was.

.....

1.5 Have you finished? (I asked him)

I asked him if he had finished.

.....

1.6 Nobody loves me. (I felt)

I felt nobody loved me.

.....

1.7 Do you want tea or coffee? (He asked her)

He asked her if she wanted tea or coffee.

.....

1.8 I'll clean the flat. (She offered)

She offered to clean the flat.

.....

1.9 When is the car going to be ready? (I asked)

I asked when the car was going to be ready.
.....

1.10 What am I doing here? (I wondered)

I wondered what I was doing there.
.....

1.11 The earth is not flat. (He proved)

He proved the earth is not flat.
.....

1.12 These figures can't be right. (I knew)

I knew the figures couldn't be right.
.....

1.13 Her cat understands everything she says. (She thought)

She thought her cat understood everything she said.
.....

1.14 What does the boss want? (I asked)

I asked what the boss wanted.

.....

1.15 Did Mary phone back? (I wondered)

I wondered if Mary had phoned back.

.....

1.16 Did dinosaurs lay eggs? (I wondered)

I wondered if dinosaurs lay eggs.

.....

1.17 You ought to see the doctor. (He advised me)

He advised me to see the doctor.

.....

1.18 Would you like a drink? (She asked him)

She asked him if he would like a drink.

.....