

REPORTED SPEECH – STATEMENTS & QUESTIONS

A> GRAMMAR: REPORTED SPEECH – STATEMENTS

When using reported speech, we have to shift the tenses used in Direct Speech to Indirect Speech in most cases.

Direct Speech	Indirect Speech
Present Simple	Past Simple
Present Continuous	Past Continuous
Present Perfect	Past Perfect
Past Simple	Past Perfect
Past Continuous	Past Perfect Continuous
Past Perfect	Past Perfect
Will	Would
Can	Could
Shall	Would
Must	Had to
Mustn't	Couldn't
May	Might
Now	Then
Today	That day
Tonight	That night
Tomorrow	The following day
Yesterday	The previous day
In two days	Two days later/after
The day before yesterday	Two days earlier/before
Last night	The previous night
This week	That week
Last month	The previous month
Next year	The following year
Ago	Earlier/Before
In 2 hours	2 hours later/after
This/These	That/Those

*"I **can** arrange to meet the other company **tomorrow**" – My boss said.*

*My boss said (that) he **could** arrange to meet the other company the following day.*

*"We **are going** to Spain **next week**." – She said.*

*She said (that) they **were going** to Spain the following week.*

NOTE: We don't have to shift the tense when:

- The **reporting verb** is in the present: [K-12 Note: We also do not shift the time.]

*"We **are going** to Italy tomorrow." – Mary **says**.*

*Mary says they **are going** to Italy tomorrow.*

- We are reporting a fact:
"Water **boils** at 100°C." – Said the teacher.
The teacher said (that) water boils at 100°C.
- There is a time clause already in the past: when, before, after, by the time, while, ...:
"I **saw** Jeff when I **was** in New York." – The man reported.
The man reported (that) he had seen Jeff when he was in New York.
- The direct speech uses would, should, could, might, ought to, had better, would rather, would like, used to
"I **believed** her but nothing **could** be done." – He said.
He said (that) he had believed her but nothing could be done.
- We report Conditional type 2, 3 or mixed, Wish, If only, As if, As though:
"If I **travel** to Singapore next month, I **will buy** you some clothes." – She said. [If 1]
She said (that) if she travelled to Singapore the following month, she would buy me some clothes.
"If we **were** a bit earlier, we **would catch** up with him." – they said. [If 2]
They said (that) if they were a bit earlier, they would catch up with him.

B> REPORTED SPEECH: WH- QUESTIONS

To report a Wh- question, we change the verb phrase from question form back to a normal statement, then shift tenses as normal.

"What **do you want** for Christmas?" – She asked me.
She asked me what I wanted for Christmas.

C> REPORTED SPEECH: YES/NO QUESTIONS

To report a Yes/No question, we do the same as Wh- questions, but add **if** or **whether** before the (S + V).

"**Would you like** to stay for some tea?" – Mary asked.
Mary asked (us) if we would like to stay for some tea.

If there are two or more options in the question, we have to use **whether**.

"**Do you want** me to wash the dishes **or** clean the table?" – The butler asked Ms.Houston.
The butler asked Ms.Houston whether she wanted him to wash the dishes or clean the table.