

Reported speech 2

A

We do not always change the verb in reported speech. If the situation *is still the same*, it is not necessary to change the verb to the past. For example:

- ☐ *direct* Paul said, '**My** new job **is** boring.'
- reported* Paul said that **his** new job **is** boring.
(The situation is still the same. His job is still boring now.)
- ☐ *direct* Helen said, '**I want** to go to Canada next year.'
- reported* Helen told me that **she wants** to go to Canada next year.
(Helen still wants to go to Canada next year.)

You can also change the verb to the past:

- ☐ Paul said that his new job **was** boring.
- ☐ Helen told me that she **wanted** to go to Canada next year.

But if the situation has *changed* or *finished*, you need to use a past verb. Compare:

- ☐ Paul left the room suddenly. He said '**I have to go.**' (*direct speech*)
- Paul left the room suddenly. He said (that) **he had to go.** (*not has to go*)

B

You need to use the past in reported speech when what was said is different from what is really true. For example:

You met Rachel a few days ago. She said:

- ☐ Have you heard? **Joe is in hospital.**

Later that day you meet Joe in the street. You say:

- ☐ Joe, this is a surprise. Rachel said you **were** in hospital.
(*not 'you are in hospital' – it's clear that he isn't*)



Joe is in hospital.



Rachel said
you **were**
in hospital

JOE

C

say and tell

If you say *who* somebody is talking to, use **tell**:

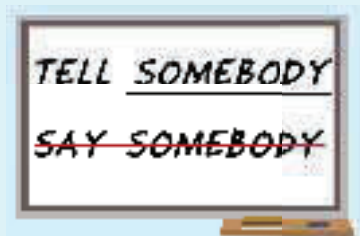
- ☐ Rachel **told me** that you were in hospital. (*not Rachel said me*)
- ☐ What did you **tell the police**? (*not say the police*)

Otherwise use **say**:

- ☐ Rachel **said** that you were in hospital.
(*not Rachel told that ...*)
- ☐ What did you **say**?

You can '**say** something **to** somebody':

- ☐ Anna **said** goodbye **to** me and left. (*not Anna said me goodbye*)
- ☐ What did you **say to** the police?



D

We say '**tell** somebody **to** ...' and '**ask** somebody **to** ...'.

Compare direct and reported speech:

- ☐ *direct* '**Drink** plenty of water,' the doctor said to me.
- reported* The doctor **told me to drink** plenty of water.
- ☐ *direct* '**Don't work** too hard,' I said to Joe.
- reported* I **told Joe not to work** too hard.
- ☐ *direct* 'Can you help me, please,' Jackie said to me.
- reported* Jackie **asked me to help** her.

You can also say 'Somebody **said (not) to** do something':

- ☐ Paul **said not to worry** about him. (*but not Paul said me*)

Exercises

48.1 Here are some things that Sarah said to you earlier:



I've never been to the United States.

I don't have any brothers or sisters.

I can't drive.

I don't like fish.

Jane has a very well-paid job.

I'm working tomorrow evening.

Jane is a friend of mine.

~~Dave is lazy.~~

But later Sarah says something different to you. What do you say?

Sarah

- 1 Dave works very hard.
- 2 Let's have fish for dinner.
- 3 I'm going to buy a car.
- 4 Jane is always short of money.
- 5 My sister lives in Paris.
- 6 I think New York is a great place.
- 7 Let's go out tomorrow evening.
- 8 I've never spoken to Jane.

You

But you said he was lazy.

But

.....

.....

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48.2 Complete the sentences with **say** or **tell** (in the correct form). Use only one word each time.

- 1 Anna said goodbye to me and left.
- 2 us about your holiday. Did you have a nice time?
- 3 Don't just stand there! something!
- 4 I wonder where Sue is. She she would be here at 8 o'clock.
- 5 Dan me that he was bored with his job.
- 6 The doctor that I should rest for at least a week.
- 7 Gary couldn't help me. He me to ask Chris.
- 8 Gary couldn't help me. He to ask Chris.
- 9 Don't anybody what I It's a secret just between us.
- 10 'Did Kate you what happened?' 'No, she didn't anything to me.'

48.3 The following sentences are direct speech:

Don't wait for me if I'm late.

Mind your own business.

Please slow down!

Can you open your bag, please?

Don't worry, Sue.

Hurry up!

Will you marry me?

Do you think you could give me a hand, Tom?

Now choose one of these to complete each of the sentences below. Use **reported speech**.

- 1 Will was taking a long time to get ready, so I told him to hurry up.
- 2 Sarah was driving too fast, so I asked
- 3 Sue was nervous about the situation. I told
- 4 I couldn't move the piano alone, so I
- 5 The security guard looked at me suspiciously and
- 6 The man started asking me personal questions, so I
- 7 Carl was in love with Maria, so he
- 8 I didn't want to delay Helen, so I