



DIRECT AND INDIRECT SPEECH

When someone speaks, we can report what they said in two ways: direct speech and indirect speech. Direct speech is when we quote the exact words that were spoken, while indirect speech is when we report what was said without using the speaker's exact words. Here's an example:

Direct speech: "I love pizza," said John. Indirect speech: John said that he loved pizza.

Using direct speech can make your writing more engaging and can help to convey the speaker's tone and emotion. However, indirect speech can be useful when you want to summarize what someone said or when you don't have the exact words that were spoken.

- Direct speech: "I will go to the park," said Sam.
- Indirect speech: Sam said that he would go to the park.

Differences between Direct and Indirect Speech

Direct speech is when you report someone's exact words, while indirect speech is when you report what someone said without using their exact words. Here are some of the key differences between direct and indirect speech:

Change of Pronouns

In direct speech, the pronouns used are those of the original speaker. However, in indirect speech, the pronouns have to be changed to reflect the perspective of the reporter. For example:

Direct speech: "I am going to the store," said Johny.

Indirect speech: Johny said he was going to the store.

In the above example, the pronoun "I" changes to "he" in indirect speech.

Change of Tenses

Another major difference between direct and indirect speech is the change of tenses. In direct speech, the verb tense used is the same as that used by the original speaker. However, in indirect speech, the verb tense may change depending on the context. For example:

Direct speech: "I am studying for my exams," said Sarah.

Indirect speech: Sarah said she was studying for her exams.

In the above example, the present continuous tense "am studying" changes to the past continuous tense "was studying" in indirect speech.

Change of Time and Place References

When reporting indirect speech, the time and place references may also change. For example:

Direct speech: "I will meet you at the park tomorrow," said Tom.

Indirect speech: Tom said he would meet you at the park the next day.

In the above example, "tomorrow" changes to "the next day" in indirect speech.

Some word transitions from direct to [reported speech](#) that will come in handy:

- Will becomes would

- Can becomes could
- would stays would
- should stays should
- must stays must or had to(matter of choice)
- shall becomes should

Exception: A present tense in direct speech may not become a past tense in the reported speech if it's a fact or something generic we are talking about in the sentence. For example-

- Direct speech: The sun rises from the East.
- Reported speech: She said that the sun rises/rose from the East.

Tense	Direct speech	Reported speech	Changed tense
Simple present	I like to swim in the ocean	She said she liked to swim in the ocean	Simple past
Simple present	I live in New Orleans	He said he lived in New Orleans	Simple past
Past simple	I went to school in the morning	She said she had gone to school that morning	Past perfect
Present continuous	I am going to the Himalayas	He said he was going to the Himalayas	Past continuous
Past continuous	I was walking near the beach	She said that she had been walking near the beach	past perfect continuous
Present perfect	I have caught a few fishes	She said she had caught a few fishes	past perfect
Past perfect	I had trekked the Himalayas this time last year	He said he had trekked the Himalayas this time last year	Past perfect

Direct speech	Reported speech
now	then / at that time
today	yesterday / that day / Tuesday / the 27th of June
yesterday	the day before yesterday / the day before / Wednesday / the 5th of December
last night	the night before, Thursday night
last week	the week before / the previous week
tomorrow	today / the next day / the following day / Friday

Converting Direct Speech Into Indirect Speech

Step 1: Remove the Quotation Marks

Step 2: Use a Reporting Verb and a Linker

- Direct speech: "I love ice cream," said Mary.
- Indirect speech: Mary said that she loved ice cream.

Step 3: Change the Tense of the Verb

- Direct speech: "I am going to the store," said John.
- Indirect speech: John said that he was going to the store.

Step 4: Change the Pronouns

- Direct speech: "Are you busy now?" Tina asked me.
- Indirect speech: Tina asked whether I was busy then.

Converting Indirect Speech Into Direct Speech

Converting indirect speech into direct speech involves changing the reported speech to its original form as spoken by the speaker. Here are the steps to follow when converting indirect speech into direct speech:

1. Identify the reporting verb: The first step is to identify the reporting verb used in the indirect speech. This will help you determine the tense of the direct speech.
2. Change the pronouns: The next step is to change the pronouns in the indirect speech to match the person speaking in the direct speech. For example, if the indirect speech is "She said that she was going to the store," the direct speech would be "I am going to the store," if you are the person speaking.
3. Change the tense: Change the tense of the verbs in the indirect speech to match the tense of the direct speech. For example, if the indirect speech is "He said that he would visit tomorrow," the direct speech would be "He says he will visit tomorrow."
4. Remove the reporting verb and conjunction: In direct speech, there is no need for a reporting verb or conjunction. Simply remove them from the indirect speech to get the direct speech.

Here is an example:

Indirect Speech: Johny said that he was tired and wanted to go home.

Direct Speech: "I am tired and want to go home," Johny said.

Direct Speech to Indirect Speech Conversion – Interrogative Sentences

- **No conjunction is used**, if a sentence in direct speech begins with a question (what/where/when) as the "question-word" itself acts as a joining clause.
- Direct: "**Where** do you live?" asked the boy.
- Indirect: The boy **enquired where** I lived.

If a direct speech sentence begins with an auxiliary verb/helping verb, the joining clause should be **if** or **whether**.

- Direct: She said, 'Will you come for the party'?
- Indirect: She asked **whether we would** come for the party.

Direct Speech to Indirect Speech Conversion – Changes in Modals

While changing direct speech to indirect speech, the modals used in the sentences change like:

1. Can becomes could
2. May becomes might
3. Must becomes had to /would have to

examples:

- Direct : She said, 'She **can** dance'.
- Indirect: She said that she **could** dance.
- Direct: She said, 'I **may** buy a dress'.
- Indirect: She said that she **might** buy a dress.
- Direct: Rama said, 'I **must** complete the assignment'.
- Indirect: Rama said that he **had to** complete the assignment.

There are modals that **do not change** – Could, Would, Should, Might, Ought to

- Direct: She said, 'I should clean the house'
- Indirect: She said that she should clean the house.

Direct Speech to Indirect Speech Conversion – Request, Command, Wish, Exclamation

- Indirect Speech is supported by some verbs like requested, ordered, suggested and advised. Therefore, **the imperative mood in the direct speech changes into the Infinitive in indirect speech.**
- Direct: She said to her 'Please complete it'.

- Indirect: She **requested** her to **complete** it.
- Direct: Hamid said to Ramid, ‘Sit down’.
- Indirect: Hamid **ordered** Ramid to **sit** down.

In Exclamatory sentences that express grief, sorrow, happiness, applaud, **Interjections are removed** and the sentence is **changed to an assertive sentence**.

- Direct: She said, ‘Alas! I am undone’.
- Indirect: She exclaimed sadly that she was broke.

Direct and Indirect Speech Exercise with Answers

Turn the following sentences into indirect speech.

1. Irwin said, ‘I am very busy now.’
2. He said, ‘The horse has been fed.’
3. ‘I know her name and address,’ said Joe.
4. ‘German is easy to learn,’ she said.
5. He said, ‘I am writing letters.’
6. ‘It is too late to go out,’ Alice said.
7. He said to me, ‘I don’t believe you.’
8. He says, ‘I am glad to be here this evening.’
9. He said to me, ‘What are you doing?’
10. ‘Where is the post office?’ asked the stranger.
11. He said, ‘Will you listen to me?’
12. John said to Peter, ‘Go away.’
13. She said to me, ‘Please wait here till I return.’
14. ‘Call the witness,’ said the judge.
15. The speaker said, ‘Be quiet and listen to my words.’

Answers

1. Irwin said that he was very busy then.
2. He said that the horse had been fed.
3. Joe said that he knew/knows her name and address. (Note that the tenses may not change if the statement is still relevant or if it is a universal truth.)
4. She said that German is/was easy to learn.
5. He said that he was writing letters.
6. Alice said that it was too late to go out.
7. He told me that he didn’t believe me. OR He said he didn’t believe me.
8. He says that he is glad to be here this evening. (When the reporting verb is in the present tense, adverbs of time and place do not normally change in indirect speech.)
9. He asked me what I was doing.
10. The stranger asked where the post office is/was.
11. He asked me if I would listen to him.
12. John ordered Peter to go away.
13. She asked me to wait there till she returned.
14. The judge commanded them to call the first witness.
15. He urged them to be quiet and listen to them.

Exercise 1: Change into indirect speech

Read the following sentences and convert them into indirect speech.

1. Rahul told to me, "When are you leaving?"
2. "Where do you live?" the stranger asked Ashok.
3. The teacher said to Sherlin, "Why are you laughing?"
4. Dhronacharya said to Arjun, "Shoot the bird's eye."
5. "Call the first convict," said the jury.
6. "Call the ambulance," said the man.
7. Paul said to me, "I shall do the work."
8. My mother said to me, "You were wrong."
9. Mr Richard said to me, "Please wait here till I return."
10. The captain said to me, "Bravo! You have played well."
11. Raju said, "Alas! My pet died."
12. Rishi said, "I may go there."
13. Peter said to Steve, "Do you hear me?"
14. The boy said, "Let me come in."
15. Granny said to me, "May God bless you."

Answers

1. Rahul asked me when I was leaving.
2. The stranger asked Ashok where he lived.
3. The teacher asked Sherlin why he was laughing.
4. Dhronacharya ordered Arjun to shoot the fish's eye.
5. The jury ordered to call the first convict.
6. The man urged to call the ambulance.
7. Paul said to me he would do the work.
8. My mother told me that I was wrong.
9. Mr Richard requested me to wait there till he returned.
10. The captain applauded me, saying that I had played well.
11. Raju exclaimed sadly that his pet died.
12. Rishi said that she might go there.
13. Peter asked Steve if he heard him.
14. The boy asked to let him come in.
15. Granny prayed that God might bless me.