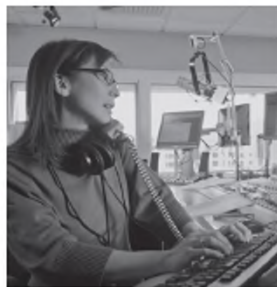


# Reported speech

Tense changes in reported speech; reporting in the same tense; verbs for reporting; verbs for reporting with to infinitive; reporting questions; reference to time, place, etc.

## A Context listening

**1** You are going to hear a radio interview. Rachel, a reporter in the studio, is talking to a man called James Baker, who is sailing in a round-the-world yacht race. What do you think she is asking him?



**2** **20** Listen and check if you were right.

**3** **20** Later, Rachel tells a colleague about the conversation. Read what Rachel says, then listen again and fill in the gaps with James's actual words.

**1** Rachel: James told me he was about 100 kilometres off the coast of Australia.

James: 'I'm \_\_\_\_\_ about 100 kilometres off the coast of Australia.'

**2** Rachel: He said he hadn't seen another boat for a few days.

James: 'I \_\_\_\_\_ another boat for a few days.'

**3** Rachel: He said he thought he might win.

James: 'I \_\_\_\_\_ win.'

**4** Rachel: He said there had been a terrible storm.

James: 'There \_\_\_\_\_ a terrible storm.'

**5** Rachel: He said he hadn't slept for three days.

James: 'I \_\_\_\_\_ for three days.'

**6** Rachel: He told me the sea was calm, the sun was shining.

James: 'The sea \_\_\_\_\_ calm, the sun \_\_\_\_\_.'

**7** Rachel: He said that he could sometimes see sharks and dolphins swimming.

James: 'I \_\_\_\_\_ sometimes see sharks and dolphins swimming.'

**8** Rachel: He said he would spend two hours in a hot bath.

James: 'I \_\_\_\_\_ two hours in a hot bath.'

**9** Rachel: He said he had to get his hair cut.

James: 'I \_\_\_\_\_ my hair cut.'

**4** **20** Complete the questions that Rachel asked. Then listen again to check.

**1** I asked him where he was. 'Where \_\_\_\_\_?'

**2** I asked him if he thought he was going to win. 'Do you \_\_\_\_\_ to win?'

**3** I asked him what the weather was like. 'What \_\_\_\_\_ like?'

**4** I asked him if he could see dolphins there. '\_\_\_\_\_ dolphins there?'

**5** Can you see any pattern to the changes to the tenses in Exercises 3 and 4?

## B Grammar

## 1 Tense changes in reported speech

When we report what someone else said, we are usually reporting at a later time so we change the tenses used by the original speaker.

Direct speech	Reported speech
<b>present simple</b> 'I'm (am) about 100 km from Australia.'	<b>past simple</b> He said (that) he <b>was</b> about 100 km from Australia.
<b>present continuous</b> 'The sun's (is) shining.'	<b>past continuous</b> He said (that) the sun <b>was shining</b> .
<b>past simple</b> 'There <b>was</b> a terrible storm.'	<b>past perfect</b> He said (that) there <b>had been</b> a terrible storm.
<b>present perfect</b> 'I <b>haven't</b> (have not) <b>seen</b> another boat.'	<b>past perfect</b> He said (that) he <b>hadn't</b> (had not) <b>seen</b> another boat.
<b>past perfect</b> 'I <b>hadn't</b> (had not) <b>expected</b> the storm.'	<b>past perfect</b> He said (that) he <b>hadn't</b> (had not) <b>expected</b> the storm.
<b>am/is/are going to</b> 'I'm (am) <b>going to</b> win.'	<b>was/were going to</b> He said (that) he <b>was going to</b> win.
<b>will</b> future 'I'll (will) <b>spend</b> two hours in a bath.'	<b>would</b> He said (that) he'd (would) <b>spend</b> two hours in a bath.
<b>can</b> 'I <b>can</b> see sharks and dolphins.'	<b>could</b> He said (that) he <b>could</b> see sharks and dolphins.
<b>may</b> 'I <b>may</b> win.'	<b>might</b> He said (that) he <b>might</b> win.
<b>might</b> 'I <b>might</b> win.'	<b>might</b> He said (that) he <b>might</b> win.
<b>must</b> 'I <b>must</b> get my hair cut.'	<b>had to</b> He said (that) he <b>had to</b> get his hair cut.

▲ The following verbs do not change when they are reported at a later time:  
*could, would, should, might, ought to, used to* and verbs in the past perfect

*You ought to buy a new coat in the sale. → My mum said I ought to buy a new coat in the sale.*

*They used to live in California. → He said they used to live in California.*

When we report *must*, we can use either *must* or *had to* in the reported speech but *had to* is more common:

*Kate: 'I must buy some fruit.' → Kate said she had to / must buy some fruit.*

▲ We use *must*, not *had to*, when we report:

- a negative:

Paul: 'You **mustn't** tell Sally our secret.' → Paul said we **mustn't** tell Sally our secret.

- a deduction:

Sarah: 'Jim **must** be tired after the flight.' → Sarah said Jim **must** be tired after the flight.

## 2 Reporting in the same tense

If the reporting verb is in the present tense (e.g. *says*), we use the same tenses as the original speaker:

Amy: 'I've *missed* the bus so I'll be a bit late.' → Amy *says she's missed* the bus so she'll be a bit late.

If the reporting verb is in the past (e.g. *said*), we sometimes use the same tenses as the original speaker if the situation is still true:

Robert: 'I *have* three sisters.'

→ Robert *said he has* three sisters. or Robert *said he had* three sisters.

Carlo: 'I'm *getting* married in June.'

If we report what Carlo said before June we can say:

→ Carlo *said he is getting* married in June. or Carlo *said he was getting* married in June.

⚠ But if we report after June, we must change the tense:

Carlo *said he was getting* married in June.

## 3 Verbs for reporting

We often use *say* and *tell* to report what somebody said:

With *say*, we must use *to* if we mention the person spoken to:

He *said to me* (that) he was going to win. (not ~~He said me~~)

*Tell* is always used without *to*, and it must be followed by the person spoken to:

He *told them* (that) he was going to win. (not ~~He told to them / He told that~~)

⚠ With *say* and *tell*, we usually omit *that*, especially in spoken English.

We can use other reporting verbs instead of *say* and *tell*. Some verbs are like *tell*:

He *reminded me* (that) it was his birthday.

She *persuaded me* (that) I should buy a different car.

He *informed me* (that) he had a new job.

They *warned us* (that) the bridge was in a dangerous condition.

Some verbs are nearly always followed by *that* and we use *to* if mentioning the person spoken to:

I *mentioned* (to my uncle) *that* Nicholas had found a new job.

The attendant *pointed out* *that* the pool would be closed on Saturday.

She *complained* (to the waiter) *that* the food was cold.

He *explained* (to us) *that* volcanic activity often caused earthquakes.

After *agree* we use *with* for the person spoken to:

Jack *agreed* (with me) *that* the film was brilliant.



Some verbs are nearly always followed by *that* but do not mention the person spoken to:

He *answered* *that* he had already read the report.

She *replied* *that* she didn't know my cousin.

#### 4 Verbs for reporting with to infinitive

We usually report orders and requests by using *tell* or *ask* + object + *to* infinitive:

'Be quiet!' → *The teacher told us to be quiet.* (= an order)

'Don't stay out late.' → *Dad told me not to stay out late.* (= an order)

'Please help me!' → *He asked us to help him.* (= a request)

'Could you carry my bag, please?' → *She asked me to carry her bag.* (a request)

Some other reporting verbs are also used with the *to* infinitive (➤ see also Unit 18):

'You should vote for me.' → *He advised us to vote for him.*

'We could help you.' → *They offered to help me.*

'I'll be a good leader.' → *He promised to be a good leader.*

'OK. I'll help you do the shopping.' → *He agreed to help me do the shopping.*

#### 5 Reporting questions

Questions are reported using the word order of a statement rather than a question.

Questions with question words (*who*, *what*, etc.) keep these words in the reported speech:

'How do you feel?' → *Rachel asked James how he felt.* (not *how did he feel*)

'What's the weather like?' → *She asked (him) what the weather was like.* (not *what was the weather like*)

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

'Can you hear me?' → *Rachel asked James if/whether he could hear her.*

'Is the sea calm?' → *Rachel wanted to know if/whether the sea was calm.*

⚠ We use the same structure when we ask politely for information:

*Can you tell me what time the next train leaves?*

*I'd like to know if there's a flight to Australia next Thursday.*

#### 6 References to time, place, etc.

Depending on how close in time we are to the original situation, we often have to change references to time when we report what someone said:

yesterday	→	the day before / the previous day
today	→	that day / the same day
tomorrow	→	the next/following day
next week	→	the next/following week
now	→	(right) then / right away, immediately, etc.

'We didn't do any work yesterday.' → *They admitted that they hadn't done any work the day before.*

'Will the library be open tomorrow?' → *She enquired whether the library would be open the following day.*

'I have to go now or I'll miss my bus.' → *He explained that he had to go right then or he'd miss his bus.*

Other changes may include:

here → there

this → that/the

'I saw him here yesterday.' → *She explained that she had seen him there the day before.*

'What's this red box?' → *He wanted to know what the red box was.*

1 You talk on the phone to a friend, Luke. This is what he says.

- 1 'I've given up my job.'
- 2 'I can easily find another one.'
- 3 'I'm going to travel round Africa.'
- 4 'I lived there as a child.'
- 5 'I might get a part-time job there.'
- 6 'I'm packing my bag.'
- 7 'I'm really excited.'
- 8 'I'll be away for a year.'
- 9 'I may stay longer.'
- 10 'You could come too.'



After your conversation with Luke, you tell another friend what he said. Change the verbs above to complete the sentences below.

- 1 He said he had given up his job.
- 2 He said he \_\_\_\_\_.
- 3 He said he \_\_\_\_\_.
- 4 He said he \_\_\_\_\_.
- 5 He said he \_\_\_\_\_.
- 6 He said he \_\_\_\_\_.
- 7 He said he \_\_\_\_\_.
- 8 He said he \_\_\_\_\_.
- 9 He said he \_\_\_\_\_.
- 10 He said I \_\_\_\_\_.

Is it possible to report what Luke said without changing the verbs? Why?

2 Match the beginnings and endings of these sentences.

- |                       |  |
|-----------------------|--|
| 1 She told            | A I could help my neighbour mend his car.                |
| 2 My sister asked     | B whether my sister could give me a lift.                |
| 3 I said              | C me she couldn't afford to come to the theatre.         |
| 4 My parents said     | D to phone home regularly.                               |
| 5 My teacher advised  | E to me, 'You shouldn't watch so much TV.'               |
| 6 I wanted to know    | F if I wanted to go on holiday with her.                 |
| 7 I told              | G the dentist that Thursday was the only day I was free. |
| 8 My brother promised | H me to revise my work more thoroughly.                  |

**3** Last year you worked at a children's holiday camp. During your interview for the job the organiser asked you the following questions.

- 1 Are you married?
- 2 How old are you?
- 3 Which university are you studying at?
- 4 Where do you come from?
- 5 Have you worked with children before?
- 6 What sports do you play?
- 7 Will you work for at least two months?
- 8 Can you start immediately?
- 9 Do you need accommodation?
- 10 Would you like any more information?

## Work abroad

We are looking for enthusiastic and lively young people to work in a children's holiday camp over the summer.

A friend of yours called Miguel is going to apply for a job at the same camp. Complete the email, telling him what questions you were asked.

Hi Miguel

Good luck with the job application! These are the things the organiser asked me about – he'll probably ask you the same sorts of questions.

He asked me (1) if I was married. He wanted to know (2) \_\_\_\_\_, which university (3) \_\_\_\_\_ at and where (4) \_\_\_\_\_. Then he asked (5) \_\_\_\_\_ with children before and what sports (6) \_\_\_\_\_.

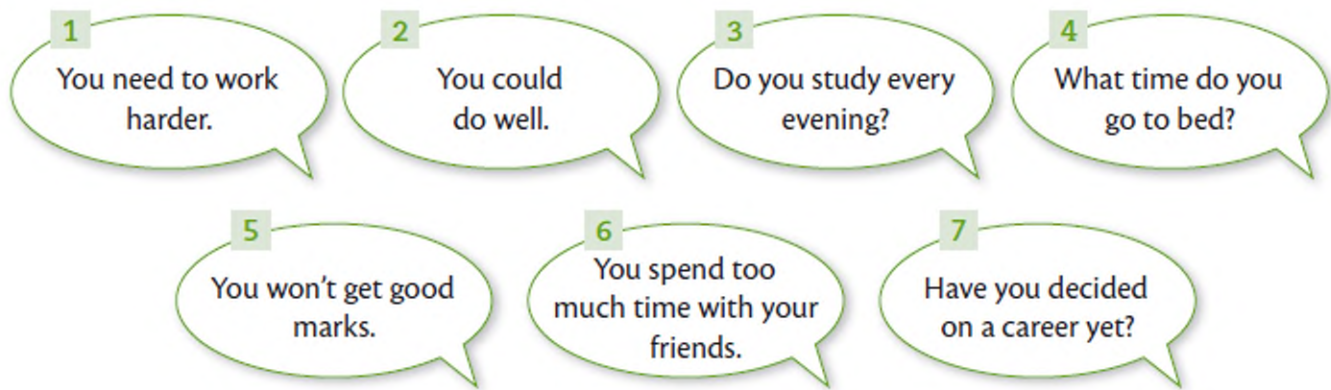
He wanted to know (7) \_\_\_\_\_ for at least two months and (8) \_\_\_\_\_ immediately. He asked (9) \_\_\_\_\_ accommodation and wondered (10) \_\_\_\_\_ any more information.

Let me know how you get on.

**4**  Correct the mistake in each of the following sentences by Cambridge First candidates.

- 1 I didn't know she had ~~said~~ you about the problem with my university. told
- 2 I asked him how he did feel about it, but he hasn't replied to my email. \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 I told her not to worry about the damage, but she replied me that it was her father's car. \_\_\_\_\_
- 4 Juan asked me if you did wanted to come. \_\_\_\_\_
- 5 She asked me did I want to go to the cinema. \_\_\_\_\_
- 6 He asked me for giving information about an interesting place to visit in London. \_\_\_\_\_
- 7 I reminded him he told me that there was a ghost in the castle. \_\_\_\_\_
- 8 He asked me if I will go to the dance with him. \_\_\_\_\_

**5** A teacher is talking to Andy, a student. Later, Andy tells a friend what the teacher said. Complete his sentences.



- 1 She said I needed to work harder.
- 2 She told \_\_\_\_\_.
- 3 She wanted to know \_\_\_\_\_.
- 4 She wondered \_\_\_\_\_.
- 5 She warned \_\_\_\_\_.
- 6 She complained \_\_\_\_\_.
- 7 She asked \_\_\_\_\_.

**6** Read what happened to Suzie the other day. Then write the conversation that she actually had.

I travel to college on the same bus every day. The other day when I got on the bus I realised that I had left my purse at home and didn't have the money for the bus fare. But the woman sitting behind me told me not to worry because she would lend me some money. She said the same thing had happened to her the day before. I asked her what she had done. She said someone had lent her the fare and she was going to give it back that afternoon on the bus, so she was happy to do the same for me. She told me I could give the money back to her the following day. I thanked her very much and told her I was very glad she was there.

Woman: Don't worry, I'll lend you some money.

Suzie: \_\_\_\_\_

Woman: \_\_\_\_\_

Suzie: \_\_\_\_\_



## Reading and Use of English Part 4

For questions 1–6, complete the second sentence so that it has a similar meaning to the first sentence, using the word given. Do not change the word given. You must use between two and five words, including the word given. Here is an example (0).

- 0 The tourist guide said to us: 'Take a map if you go walking in the hills.'

**ADVISED**

The tourist guide \_\_\_\_\_ *advised us to take* \_\_\_\_\_ a map if we went walking in the hills.

- 1 The weatherman forecast that it would be sunny all day.

**SHINE**

The weatherman said: 'The \_\_\_\_\_ all day.'

- 2 'I haven't heard from Helen for a long time,' Paul said to me.

**TOLD**

Paul \_\_\_\_\_ not heard from Helen for a long time.

- 3 'Did you book a room with a balcony?' I asked my mother.

**IF**

I asked my mother \_\_\_\_\_ a room with a balcony.

- 4 Jack wanted to know what time they would leave the next day to catch the train.

**WE**

Jack asked: 'What time \_\_\_\_\_ to catch the train?'

- 5 The little boy said he could dress himself without any help.

**I**

The little boy said: '\_\_\_\_\_ without any help.'

- 6 'Are we meeting David in the morning or the afternoon?' Karen asked.

**WHETHER**

Karen wondered \_\_\_\_\_ in the morning or the afternoon.

## Grammar focus task

In three of the sentences above, the reporting verbs can be replaced with *complain*, *insist* and *predict*. Write the reported sentences again using these verbs.

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