

Statements in indirect speech : tense changes necessary

Introduced by present tense verb:

Indirect speech can be introduced by a verb in a present tense: *he says that...* this is usual when we are:

- Reporting a conversation,
- Reading a letter and reporting what it says,
- Reading instructions and reporting them,
- Reporting a statement that someone makes very often, e.g. *Tom says that he'll never get married.*

When the introductory verb is in the present, present perfect or future tense we can report the direct speech without any change of tense

Introduced by past tense verb:

But indirect speech is usually introduced by a verb in the past tense.

Verbs in the direct speech have then to be changed into a corresponding past tense. The changes are shown in the following table. (The "that" has been omitted in the last five examples)

<i>Direct speech</i>	<i>Indirect speech</i>
• <u>Simple present:</u> "I never eat meat," he explained.	• <u>Simple past:</u> He explained that he never ate meat.
• <u>Present continuous:</u> "I'm waiting for Ann" he said,	• <u>Past continuous:</u> He said (that) he was waiting for Ann.
• <u>Present perfect:</u> "I've found a flat" he said,	• <u>Past perfect:</u> He said (that) he had found a flat.
• <u>Present perfect continuous:</u> He said, "I've been waiting for ages"	• <u>Past perfect continuous:</u> He said he had been waiting for ages.
• <u>Simple past:</u> "I took it home with me" he said,	• <u>Past perfect:</u> She said she had taken it home with her.
• <u>Future:</u> "I will/shall be in Paris on Monday." He said	• <u>Conditional:</u> He said he would be in Paris on Monday.
• <u>Future continuous:</u> "I will/shall be using the car myself on the 24 th ," he said	• <u>Future continuous:</u> He said he'd be using the car herself on 24 th .
• <u>But note, Conditional</u> I said, "I would/should like to see it."	• <u>Conditional:</u> I said I would/should like to see it.

➤ **Expression of time & place**

○ ***Direct***

Today
Yesterday
The day before yesterday
Tomorrow

indirect

that day
the day before
two days before
the next/following day