

Direct and indirect speech - Past tense

If we want to say what other people said, thought or felt, we can use the direct and indirect speech (reported speech).

Reporting words

advise, agree, answer, ask, accuse, admit, boast, claim, complain, declare, demand, deny, explain, promise, reply, report, say, suggest, tell, think, warn, etc.

Direct Speech (the exact words someone used)	Indirect Speech (the exact meaning of what someone said, but not the exact words)
Past tense	Past perfect (had + past participle of the verb)
She said, "I saw him".	She said (that) she had seen him.
He said, "My sister was tired".	He said (that) his sister had been tired.
She asked, " Did you buy a new book?".	She asked me if I had bought a new book.
Tony said, "We won the game".	Tony said (that) they had won the game.
Julie said, "I lost my ring yesterday".	Julie said (that) she had lost her ring the day before.
Andy told me, "I bought a pen last week".	Andy told me (that) he had bought a pen the week before.

Pronoun changes

Pronoun Changes	Direct Speech	Indirect / Reported Speech
Personal Pronouns	I you we me you us	he, she I, she, he, we, they they him, her him, her, us, them them
Possessive Pronouns	my your our mine yours ours	his, her my, his, her, our, their their his, hers mine, his, hers, ours, theirs theirs

Modal verbs

Direct Speech	Indirect Speech
will He said, "I'll go to school tomorrow."	would He said (that) he would go to school tomorrow.
can She said, "I can run very fast."	could She said (that) she could run very fast.
must He told me, "I must have an umbrella"	had to He told me (that) he had to have an umbrella.
shall She asked, "What shall we do today?"	should She asked what we should do today.
may Kim said, "May I go to bathroom?"	might Kim asked if she might go to the bathroom.

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