

# Reported Speech

## Tense Changes

Direct Speech Tense	Reported Speech Tense	Example
Simple Present	Simple Past	"I <b>love</b> you." → She said that she <b>loved</b> me.
Present Progressive	Past Progressive	"I <b>am going</b> to the party." → He said that he <b>was going to</b> the party.
Present Perfect	Past Perfect	"I <b>have</b> already <b>eaten</b> ." → She said that she <b>had</b> already <b>eaten</b> .
Simple Past	Past Perfect	"I <b>arrived</b> on time." → He said that he <b>had arrived</b> on time.
Past Progressive	Past Perfect Progressive	"I <b>was sleeping</b> ." → He said that he <b>had been sleeping</b> .
Simple Future	Conditional	"You <b>will have</b> a test on Thursday." → The professor said that we <b>would have</b> a test on Thursday.
Future Progressive	Conditional Progressive	"I <b>will be travelling</b> to Spain." → She said that she <b>would be travelling</b> to Spain.
Imperative	Infinitive	" <b>Eat</b> your vegetables." → My mother told me <b>to eat</b> my vegetables.
Can ( <i>modal of ability</i> )	Could	"You <b>can eat</b> whatever you want." → The doctor said that I <b>could eat</b> whatever I wanted.
Could ( <i>modal of possibility</i> )	Could ( <i>no change</i> )	"It <b>could rain</b> on the day of the big game." → Our coach said that it <b>could rain</b> on the day of the big game.
Might ( <i>modal of possibility</i> )	Might ( <i>no change</i> )	"We <b>might go</b> skiing on the weekend." → They said that they <b>might go</b> skiing on the weekend.
May ( <i>modal of possibility</i> )	Might	"She <b>may travel</b> abroad in summer." → You said that she <b>might travel</b> abroad in summer.
Should ( <i>modal of advice</i> )	Should ( <i>no change</i> )	"You <b>should eat</b> more vegetables." → My mother said that I <b>should eat</b> more vegetables.
Must ( <i>modal of obligation</i> )	Had To	"You <b>must complete</b> the report by 5:00." → My boss said that I <b>had to complete</b> the report by 5:00.
Have To ( <i>modal of obligation</i> )	Had To	"He <b>has to finish</b> the report by 5:00." → His boss said that he <b>had to finish</b> the report by 5:00.

## Notes

### Note #1

A simple present verb can be reported in the simple present instead of the past when the action has just occurred or if the statement is a well-known fact.

- Ruth said that she **loves** me.
- Ruth always tells me that she **loves** me.

### Note #2

Sometimes, when making predictions, the reporting verb is in the simple future and the other clause is in the simple present.

- My mother **will say** that she **is** too sick to go.

### Note #3

The relative pronoun *that* used after the reporting verb is optional, but commonly used. There is no difference in meaning.

- ✓ Margo said **that** she would call me after breakfast tomorrow.
- ✓ Margo said she would call me after breakfast tomorrow.

### Note #4

Use *said* without a direct object.

- ✓ Jim said that he was coming.
- ✗ Jim said **me** that he was coming.

### Note #5

Use *told* with a direct object.

- ✓ The teacher told **me** to come early.
- ✗ The teacher told to come early.

### Note #6

In reporting imperatives (commands), remember to use the correct negative infinitive form (not + infinitive).

- Rosita told me **not to eat** cake before dinner.