

Direct Indirect Speech Rules

Rule 1. Remove inverted commas and use 'that': While changing direct speech into indirect speech, remove inverted commas and use that instead of commas.

Direct to Indirect speech Example:

- Rahul says, "There are eight planets." (Direct Speech)
- Rahul says that there are eight planets. (Indirect Speech)

As in the above sentence inverted commas are removed in indirect speech and the conjunction 'that' is also used.

Note:- In indirect speech, tense does not change:

1. If the reported speech (the part of the sentence which is inside inverted commas) is habitual action or universal truth.
2. If the reporting verb is in the present tense then the tense will not be changed.

For examples:

1. My teacher says, "The earth is round."

In the above sentence, reporting verb is in the present tense so it will not change into the past and reported speech is also a universal truth that can not be changed.

Rule 2. Change in tense: When the reporting verb is in the past tense then reported speech will be changed into past tense in indirect speech.

Direct to Indirect speech Example:

- She said, "I will go." (Direct Speech)
- She said that she would go. (Indirect Speech)

As, in the above sentence reporting verb is in the past tense so we have converted reported speech into past tense in indirect speech i.e, will-would.

Read the following table to learn the conversion of tenses

Direct Speech	Indirect Speech
Simple Present	Simple Past
Present Continuous	Past Continuous
Present Perfect	Past Perfect
Present Perfect Continuous	Past Perfect Continuous

Simple Past	Past Perfect
Past Continuous	Past Perfect Continuous
Will	Would
May	Might
Can	Could
Shall	Should

Rule 3. Change in Pronoun: The pronoun or subject of the reported speech is changed according to the subject or the pronoun of the reporting verb (first part) of the sentence. The possessive pronouns (his, hers, mine) are also changed sometimes according to the personal or object pronoun.

Direct to Indirect speech Example

- He said, "I eat an apple." (Direct Speech)
- He said that he ate an apple. (Indirect Speech)

In the above example 'I' is changed into 'he' according to the reporting verb (first part) and the tense is also changed because reporting verb (first part) is in the past tense.

Rule 4. Change in Time: If the word related to time is given in the sentence then it will be changed in indirect speech. Some rules must be followed while doing this and those are given in the following table.

Direct Speech	Indirect Speech
Today	That day
Tomorrow	Next day or the following day
Yesterday	Previous day
Now	Then
Tonight	That night
Yesterday night	Previous night
Tomorrow night	Following night
Here	There

Rule 5. Interrogative sentences: No conjunction is used, if a sentence in direct speech starts with a question word (what/where/when) as the "question-word" itself acts as conjunction.

Direct to Indirect speech Example

- "Where are you going?" asked the boy. (Direct Speech)
- The boy asked where I was going. (Indirect Speech)

Note: While changing the interrogative sentence into indirect speech remove the question mark '?'.

Rule 6. Yes/No Interrogative sentences: If a direct speech sentence starts with an auxiliary verb/helping verb, the joining clause will be changed into if or whether.

Direct to Indirect speech Example:

- He asked me "Do you come with me?" (Direct Speech)
- He enquired whether/if I am coming with him. (Indirect Speech)

Note: While changing the interrogative sentence reporting verbs (verbs used in the first part) such as 'said/ said to' changes to enquired, asked, or demanded.

Rule 7. Request, Command, Wished, Enquired: Some verbs, such as requested, ordered, urged, and advised, are used in indirect speech. For the negative statements, the word forbidden is used. As a result, in indirect communication, the imperative mood that is present in direct speech is replaced by the infinitive word.

Direct to Indirect speech Example

- She said to her, "Please do this work." (Direct Speech)
- She requested her to complete that work. (Indirect Speech)

Rule 8. Exclamatory Sentence: Interjections words are removed from exclamatory sentences that express (grief, sorrow, delight, or applaud) and the sentence is transformed into an assertive sentence.

Direct to Indirect speech Example

- Students said, "Hurrah! India has won the match."(Direct Speech)
- Students exclaimed with joy that India had won the match.(Indirect Speech)

Direct and Indirect Conversion Chart

Tense	Tense Change	Direct Speech	Reported Speech
Present simple	Past simple	She always wears a coat.	He said that she always wore a coat. 
Present continuous	Past continuous	I'm looking for my keys.	He said that he was looking for his keys. 
Past simple	Past perfect	My friend gave me a bar of chocolate.	He said that his friend had given him a bar of chocolate. 
Past continuous	Past perfect continuous	We were living in London.	They said that they had been living in London. 
Present perfect	Past perfect	She has written three letters for her friend.	She said that she had written three letters for her friend. 
Past perfect	Past perfect	The bread had gone stale.	She said the bread had gone stale. 
Past perfect continuous	Past perfect continuous	He had been teaching in my school for 15 years.	They said that he had been teaching in their school in 15 years. 
Will	Would	I will finish my report in two days.	He said that he would finish his report in two days. 
Would	Would	He would work in the garden.	They said that he would work in the garden. 
Can	Could	I can speak English.	She said she could speak English. 
Could	Could	He could play in the match.	They said he could play in the match. 
Shall	Would	I shall obey the rules.	She said she would obey the rules. 
Should	Should	I should start a job.	She said that she should start a job. 
May	Might	I might invite them to the dinner.	She said that she might invite them to the dinner. 
Might	Might	He might get a flight tomorrow.	She said he might get a flight the next day. 
Must	Must/had to	I must go to the bank and get some money.	She said she must/had to go to the bank and get some money. 
Have to	Had to	I have to submit this assignment by 3pm tomorrow.	She said she had to submit this assignment by 3pm tomorrow. 