

# Direct & Reported Speech

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## Grammar Notes

### A. Direct Speech

Direct speech is mainly used to write dialogue or quoted speech.  
Read how to punctuate direct speech below.

Position of Quoted Speech	Instructions	Examples
<b>at the end of a sentence</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Place a comma after the subject and reporting verb (<i>said, commented, added, explained, yelled, etc.</i>)</li> <li>2. Insert the first set of quotation marks.</li> <li>3. Begin the sentence or phrase inside the quotation marks with a capital letter.</li> <li>4. Place the correct punctuation (<i>period, question mark, exclamation point, etc.</i>) at the end of the sentence.</li> <li>5. Insert the second set of quotation marks <i>after</i> the punctuation.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The doctor said, "Take your medicine every day."</li> <li>• The professor said, "We will have a test tomorrow afternoon."</li> <li>• The candidate commented, "I have always been honest."</li> <li>• Victor asked, "Why do you always come late?"</li> <li>• The coach screamed, "You have to play harder than this!"</li> </ul>
<b>at the beginning of a sentence</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Begin with the first set of quotation marks.</li> <li>2. Capitalize the first letter of the sentence.</li> <li>3. At the end of the sentence, place a comma, question mark, or exclamation mark (<i>not</i> a period).</li> <li>4. Insert the second set of quotation marks <i>after</i> the comma.</li> <li>5. Insert the subject and reporting verb, and end the sentence with a period.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "I have always loved you," Kil Yi whispered.</li> <li>• "Take your bags and report to section five!" the sergeant screamed.</li> <li>• "Why do you always bother me?" the trainer asked.</li> <li>• "Please don't take my purse," Laura pleaded.</li> <li>• "Those roses are fantastic!" Emily exclaimed.</li> </ul>



## Grammar Notes cont.

### A. Direct Speech cont.

Position of Quoted Speech	Instructions	Examples
<b>split by the subject and the verb</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Begin with the first set of quotation marks.</li> <li>2. Capitalize the first letter of the sentence.</li> <li>3. At the end of the first part of the quote, place a comma and quotation marks.</li> <li>4. Insert the subject and reporting verb, and follow the verb with a comma.</li> <li>5. Include another set of quotation marks and begin the second part of the quote with the lower case.</li> <li>6. Punctuate the end of the sentence.</li> <li>7. Include the second set of quotation marks.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "I think," Bob commented, "that this is the worst day of my life."</li> <li>• "Could you please explain," Karen asked, "why you are always so rude?"</li> <li>• "I really feel," Victoria said, "that you are 100% wrong."</li> <li>• "Pick up your registration forms in Room 122," the counselor stated, "and go to the gym with your ID."</li> <li>• "I have never stolen anything," Fred said, "and I have never lied, either."</li> </ul>

### B. Indirect or Reported Speech

Reported speech is commonly used in speaking and writing. It is important to note that most verb tenses will change from direct to reported speech. The chart on the next page shows the most common verb and modal changes.

#### Back It Up!

Usually the tense change from direct to reported speech involves a **backward** move into the past.

- simple present → simple past
- simple past → past perfect

etc.

## Grammar Notes cont.

### B. Indirect or Reported Speech cont.

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> ." → She said that she <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 traveling</b> to Spain." → She said that she <b>would be traveling</b> to Spain.
Imperative	Infinitive	" <b>Eat</b> your vegetables." → My mother told me <b>to eat</b> my vegetables.
Can (modal of ability)	Could	"You <b>can eat</b> whatever you want." → The doctor said that I <b>could eat</b> whatever I wanted.
Could (modal of possibility)	Could (no change)	"It <b>could rain</b> on the day of the big game." → She said that it <b>could rain</b> on the day of the big game.
Might (modal of possibility)	Might (no change)	"We <b>might go</b> skiing on the weekend." → They said that they <b>might go</b> skiing on the weekend.
May (modal of possibility)	Might	"She <b>may travel</b> abroad in summer." → He said that she <b>might travel</b> abroad in summer.
Should (modal of advice)	Should (no change)	"You <b>should eat</b> more vegetables." → My mother said that I <b>should eat</b> more vegetables.
Must (modal of obligation)	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 (modal of obligation)	Had To	"She <b>has to finish</b> the report by 5:00." → She said that she <b>had to finish</b> the report by 5:00.

## Grammar Notes cont.

### C. 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.

## Exercise 1

Punctuate the following sentences.

Use direct speech. Use capital letters where necessary.

1. John said I am very happy to meet you
2. The doctor said you should cut down on your salt intake
3. Natasha explained I am here to learn not to fool around
4. Pack your bags and get out of here screamed the landlord
5. I believe Toshiko said that you are holding my bag
6. Can you tell me how to get to Route 17 Atsuko asked
7. The fastest way out is through the library Robert explained
8. The professor said we will have a test on Friday
9. Boris yelled where are my new shoes
10. I think that you are wrong Oleg stated and I also feel that you don't understand the subject at all

## Exercise 2

Circle one or more mistakes in each sentence,  
and write the correct sentences below.

1. "I will come on time." the doctor said.

---

2. "Do you love me" Russell asked.

---

3. "I will never leave you." Paula explained. "And I will always be there for you."

---

4. Cynthia said, "Please tell me what to do".

---

5. Bob exclaimed You just stole my wallet!

---

6. "Can you please. Maria asked, "Tell me where is the library."

---

7. Boomer said my parents are leaving right away.

---

8. "Where are my shoes Bill asked.

---

9. Hee Won said i am sorry to hear about that".

---

10. Grandpa always said always to dress nicely the first time you meet someone.

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## Exercise 3

Change the sentences with reported speech to sentences with direct speech.

1. The professor said that he would correct the tests on Saturday.

---

2. Natalia asked where the cafeteria was.

---

3. The doctor explained that he would operate on Tuesday.

---

4. My mother said that she was tired.

---

5. Greta told me not to leave so early.

---

6. Mark said that he could speak four languages.

---

7. Shirley told me to take notes in biology class.

---

8. My sister said that we would leave early Sunday morning.

---

9. Hideyuki explained that he was feeling sick.

---

10. Harold asked why I was wearing such old clothes.

---



## Exercise 4

Report these sentences, beginning with "Lisa said that..."

1. "We must leave at 6:00."

*Lisa said that* \_\_\_\_\_

2. "My birthday will be a special day."

\_\_\_\_\_

3. "I may go to the movies after class."

\_\_\_\_\_

4. "Letitia has to come to the party."

\_\_\_\_\_

5. "I might not come with you to the restaurant."

\_\_\_\_\_

6. "It will probably rain on Thursday."

\_\_\_\_\_

7. "Paul won't remember to call me."

\_\_\_\_\_

8. "Julie can give her presentation after Hanna."

\_\_\_\_\_

9. "Juan will never do it on time."

\_\_\_\_\_

10. "You should buy a new pair of shoes for the dance."

\_\_\_\_\_

## Exercise 5

Report these sentences, beginning with "The professor said that..."

When an infinitive verb is required, use "The professor told us..."

1. "We will have a test on Monday."

*The professor said that* \_\_\_\_\_

2. "We are going to study conditionals."

\_\_\_\_\_

3. "Study hard!"

\_\_\_\_\_

4. "The exam is easy."

\_\_\_\_\_

5. "You should bring a dictionary to class."

\_\_\_\_\_

6. "Don't cheat!"

\_\_\_\_\_

7. "Leave when you are finished."

\_\_\_\_\_

8. "I am going to correct the tests on the weekend."

\_\_\_\_\_

9. "You can take the tests home."

\_\_\_\_\_

10. "The class will end on Wednesday, August 7."

\_\_\_\_\_

## Exercise 6

Circle one or more mistakes in each sentence,  
and write the correct sentences below.

1. Rosa said that she will come early to the meeting.

---

2. The doctor said me not eat so much beef.

---

3. Olivia told that she will be late.

---

4. The counselor told me not take any more literature classes.

---

5. Maria Pia said that she is not going to Colombia.

---

6. Kil Yi said that he is gonna leave at 6:00.

---

7. Victor said never to cheat on exams.

---

8. Isabella said me that she will not never marry me.

---

9. My mother told me cook dinner myself.

---

10. Elise said that she has already eat.

---

## Exercise 7

Choose the correct answer.

1. "I can't drive a truck," Bill said. Bill said that \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a) he couldn't drive a truck
  - b) couldn't he drive a truck
2. "Where is Piadora?" Carmine asked. Carmine asked \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a) where was Piadora
  - b) where Piadora was
3. "You will have another chance to raise your grade," the professor said. The professor said that \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a) we will have another chance to raise our grades
  - b) we would have another chance to raise our grades
4. "You must stop taking those pills," the doctor explained. The doctor explained that I \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a) had to stop taking those pills
  - b) can stop taking those pills
5. "Get out of here!" the clerk told me. The clerk told me \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a) to get out of there
  - b) that I should get out of there
6. "We should study harder," Samantha said. Samantha said \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a) we must study harder
  - b) we should study harder
7. "I am going to Montreal tomorrow," Jesse said. Jesse said \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a) that she was going to Montreal the next day.
  - b) that she is going to Montreal the next day.
8. "Is this your coat?" Gee asked. Gee asked me \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a) if that was my coat
  - b) if that is my coat
9. "Can you help me?" Irina asked. Irina asked me \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a) if I can help her
  - b) if I could help her
10. "I have already studied this unit," Ned said. Ned said \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a) he has already studied that unit
  - b) he had already studied that unit

## Exercise 8

Change the sentences with direct speech to sentences with reported speech. Pay particular attention to the verb tenses.

1. "You can play the piano well."

*John said that I*

---

---

2. "Leave when you finish the test."

*The teacher told us*

---

---

3. "I am not going to eat the whole chicken."

*Carlos said that he*

---

---

4. "Don't take the last one."

*My mother told me*

---

---

5. "The painter will begin work on Monday."

*My brother explained that*

---

---

6. "Don't speed anymore!" the police officer said.

*The police officer told me*

---

---

7. "You should study the past tense," the teacher said.

*The teacher said that*

---

---

8. "Cut the grass after lunch."

*My father told me*

---

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9. "I am going to Philadelphia in May."

*Bob said that he*

---

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10. "Ranklin will win the election."

*The governor predicted that*

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