

REPORTED SPEECH

Reports are often given in a different place from where the original words were spoken, and at a later time. In any reports introduced by a reporting verb in the past tense, the original tenses will often **need to be changed accordingly**. It may also be necessary to change adverbs of time or place, so that words like today, tomorrow, here mean the same at the time and place of the report as in the original utterance:

„I'll meet you here at the same time tomorrow“

=He said he would meet me there at the same time the following day.

Reporting questions involves a change in sentence structure: the verb forms are **no longer interrogative**, nor is a question mark used at the end of the reporting sentence.

“Where do you live?” = He wanted to know where I lived.

“How old was he then?” = She asked me how old he had been then.

“Are you English?” = He wondered if/whether I was English.

EXERCISES:

I. Finish the sentences transforming the indirect speech into reported speech.

1. How old are you? He wanted to know...
2. Do you know the way? He asked me...
3. Have you seen it? He asked her...
4. I will call you tomorrow. He said...
5. Who has borrowed my pen? He wanted to know...
6. I'm working for an Austrian institute next month. He told us...
7. I saw him yesterday. He said...

II. Transform the sentences so that the new ones have as close meaning to the original ones as it is possible.

1. 'Be careful!' We warned him...
2. 'Why don't you take a rest?' I suggested he...
3. 'Please go away!' He asked me...
4. 'Really? Great! I cannot believe it!' He expressed considerable...
5. 'Yes, that's right. I am interested in the project.' He confirmed his...
6. 'I wouldn't tell anyone if I were you.' He advised me...

III. Replace the word 'said' in the sentences by one of the words at the head of the exercise, and report them with the use of those verbs. Use each verb once only.

suggested	agreed	muttered	exclaimed
insisted	whispered	boasted	admitted
shouted	claimed	objected	protested

1. 'I can speak 6 languages fluently,' he said.
2. 'Let's go to the cinema this evening,' he said.
3. 'Stop that noise in the classroom,' said the teacher.

4. 'That car you're driving is my property,' the man said.
5. 'Yes, I broke the window with my catapult,' the boy said.
6. 'You can't take me to prison, I know my rights,' the man said.
7. 'I shall always love you,' said his fiancée.
8. 'We don't have enough money to carry out the plan,' said the researcher.
9. 'This teacher doesn't know what he's talking about,' said the student.
10. 'Well, it is a surprise to meet you here today!' she said.
11. 'Well, yes, if the weather is bad, we can't go,' he said.
12. 'If you can't come today, you simply must come tomorrow,' she said.

Source: Graver, B.D. (1993); *Advanced English Practice* Oxford University Press