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# GRAMMAR FOR IELTS

**Reported speech**

**TENSES WHICH CHANGE**

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# EXPLANATION

- It is possible to use **DIRECT SPEECH** or **REPORTED SPEECH** to report what somebody said.
- In **DIRECT SPEECH**, we repeat the exact words of the speaker. For example, **She said: This is the most difficult test I have ever done.**
- In **REPORTED SPEECH (INDIRECT SPEECH)** we communicate the exact/precise meaning of what somebody said but we don't use exactly the same words. For example, **She told us that it was the most difficult test she had ever done.**

# EXPLANATION

- When reporting what somebody has said, you usually need a past tense verb like **said, told, mentioned, admitted** or **promised**. The main verb usually needs to go into the past, or change in some way.
- For example, **PRESENT SIMPLE** verbs usually become **PAST SIMPLE** verbs. **PAST SIMPLE** and **PRESENT PERFECT** verbs usually become **PAST PERFECT** verbs.
- Being able to use and understand **REPORTED SPEECH** is especially useful in the Listening and Speaking Tests, and sometimes in General and Academic Writing Task 1.

# REPORTED SPEECH

## CHANGING TENSES

Often, reported speech is introduced by a verb in the past tense. When this happens, we usually have to make changes.

Verbs in the present simple tense change to the past simple tense:

- **I love dancing** = He **told** us that he **loved** dancing.
- **I am impressed** = He **mentioned** that he **was** impressed.
- **The conference room has all of the facilities necessary** = He **assured** us that the conference room **had** all of the facilities necessary.
- **It doesn't matter** = She **said** that it **didn't** matter.
- **We have three beautiful conference rooms** = She **explained** that they **had** three beautiful conference rooms.

# REPORTED SPEECH

## CHANGING TENSES

Verbs in the present continuous tense change to the past continuous:

- I am living in Canada = He **said** that he **was living** in Canada.
- The manager is coming = She **informed** us that the manager **was coming**.
- I'm thinking about retiring = He **explained** that he **was thinking** about retiring.
- I'm hoping to get a promotion = She **mentioned** that she **was hoping** to get a promotion.
- I'm not working = He **told** us that he **wasn't working**.
- We are renovating the hotel at the moment = She **explained** that they **were renovating** the hotel at that moment.

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# REPORTED SPEECH

## CHANGING TENSES

Verbs in the past continuous tense change to the past perfect continuous:

- **We were thinking of emigrating to Australia** = They **mentioned** that they **had been thinking** of emigrating to Australia.
- **I was living in New Zealand when the earthquake struck** = He **told** us that he **had been living** in New Zealand when the earthquake struck.
- **I was dealing with the issue** = The receptionist **said** that he **had been dealing** with the issue.
- **I wasn't listening** = She **admitted** that she **hadn't been listening**.

# REPORTED SPEECH

## CHANGING TENSES

Verbs in the present perfect tense change to the past perfect:

- The poor economic climate has affected profits = The manager explained that the poor economic climate had affected profits.
- We've never been to such a boring conference = We agreed that we had never been to such a boring conference.
- I have never worked in such a pressurised environment = She mentioned that she had never worked in such a pressurised environment.
- I haven't been given enough money = She explained that she hadn't been given enough money. (This is a passive form)



# REPORTED SPEECH

## CHANGING TENSES

Verbs in the present perfect continuous tense change to the past perfect continuous:

- I've been trying to contact the manager for an hour = She **told** me that she **had been trying** to contact the manager for an hour.
- I've been sleeping all morning = He **explained** that he **had been sleeping** all morning.
- I've been driving for six hours = She **told** us that she **had been driving** for six hours.
- I haven't been feeling very well recently = She **said** that she **hadn't been feeling** very well recently.

# REPORTED SPEECH

## CHANGING TENSES

Verbs in the past simple tense change to the past perfect:

- **It rained all day** = He **told** me that it **had rained** all day.
- **I met you once at a party** = He **said** he **had met** me once at a party.
- **I made a lot of money as an investment banker** = She **boasted** that she **had made** a lot of money as an investment banker.
- **I didn't know about the accident** = She **explained** that she **hadn't known** about the accident.
- **I didn't come because of the rain** = She **said** that she **hadn't come** because of the rain.

# REPORTED SPEECH

## CHANGING TENSES

Verbs in the simple future tense (with **will**) change to the conditional:

- **I will try to make it** = He **said** he **would try** to make it.
- **The weather will improve soon** = He **promised** that the weather **would improve** soon.
- **She will struggle to pass the exam** = The teacher **predicted** that she **would struggle** to pass the exam.
- **I won't tell a soul** = She **promised** that she **wouldn't tell** a soul.
- **I will send you a confirmatory email as soon as the payment has been received** = She **promised** that she **would send** us a confirmatory email as soon as the payment had been received.

# REPORTED SPEECH

## CHANGING TENSES

Verbs in the future continuous tense change to the conditional continuous:

- I will be arriving in the evening = He **said** he **would be arriving** in the evening.
- I will be discussing the matter at the meeting = She **said** she **would be discussing** the matter at the meeting.
- I will be revising all day = He **said** he **would be revising** all day.
- I won't be coming to the party = She **said** that she **wouldn't be coming** to the party.

# REPORTED SPEECH

## CHANGING TENSES

First conditionals change to second conditionals:

- **We can/will give you a discount if you book for two or more days** = She **mentioned** that they **could/would give** us a discount if we **booked** for two or more days.
- **If I see him, I will give him the money I owe** = She **promised** that if she **saw** you, she **would give** you the money she owes.
- **If it rains, we will have to postpone the match** = They **stated** that if it **rained**, they **would have to postpone** the match.
- **We will come if we have time** = They **mentioned** that they **would come** if they **had** time.



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# GRAMMAR FOR IELTS

**Reported speech**

**TENSES WHICH DO NOT  
CHANGE**



# EXPLANATION

- It is possible to use **DIRECT SPEECH** or **REPORTED SPEECH** to report what somebody said.
- When reporting what somebody has said, you usually need a past tense verb like **said, told, mentioned, admitted** or **promised**. The main verb usually needs to go into the past or change in some way.
- However, in some cases, the main verb does not change.

# REPORTED SPEECH

## TENSES WHICH DO NOT CHANGE

When we report a statement which somebody makes often/regularly (using a present simple, present perfect or future form) we don't need to change the tenses in the rest of the sentence:

- **My colleagues always tell me** that they **are** overworked and that they **will** never **get** everything done.
- **Every time I see her she lets me know** that she **is** extremely talented and that she **is going to be** famous one day.
- **My boss has told me a million times** that he **is** incredibly busy.
- **As soon as I open the front door, the children will tell me** that they **need** help with their homework and that they **haven't** even **started** it yet. This happens every single day.

# REPORTED SPEECH

## TENSES WHICH DO NOT CHANGE

We do not always change the simple present tense if it describes something which is still true now:

- I hate doing paperwork = She **admitted** that she **hates doing** paperwork.
- I find school quite boring = He **said** that he **finds** school quite boring.
- I speak several languages fluently = He **boasted** that he **speaks** several languages fluently.
- I want to get a promotion = He **told** me that he **wants** to get a promotion.

# REPORTED SPEECH

## TENSES WHICH DO NOT CHANGE

We do not always change the simple past tense if it describes something which is still true now:

- I decided to become a vet at the age of eleven = She **said** that she decided / had decided to become a vet at the age of eleven.
- I never received your email = She **insisted** that she never received / had never received my email.
- I paid for a double-room with a balcony = She **said** that she paid for / had paid for a double-room with a balcony.
- I didn't understand much maths at school = She **said** she didn't understand / hadn't understood much maths at school.

# REPORTED SPEECH

## TENSES WHICH DO NOT CHANGE

We do not always change the past continuous tense if it describes something which is not completed:

- **They were still working when I arrived** = She **told** us that they **were still working / had still been working** when she arrived.
- **It was raining** = He **said** that it **was raining / had been raining**.
- **When I was working in Mumbai, I met a lot of interesting people** = She **said** that when she **was working / had been working** in Mumbai, she **met / had met** a lot of interesting people.
- **The situation wasn't improving** = He **admitted** that the situation **wasn't improving / hadn't been improving**.

# REPORTED SPEECH

## TENSES WHICH DO NOT CHANGE

We do not usually change the past perfect tense or the past perfect continuous tense:

- I had already seen it = She **said** that she **had** already **seen** it.
- I had already been in Mexico for a week when you arrived = She **said** she **had** already **been** in Mexico for a week when I arrived.
- I had been thinking about retiring for a while = She **confessed** that she **had** been thinking about retiring for a while.
- I had been wondering where you were = She **explained** that she **had** been wondering where I was.

# REPORTED SPEECH

## TENSES WHICH DO NOT CHANGE

Unreal past tenses (subjunctives) do not change (but the verbs which subjunctives are connected to can change):

- I wish I was younger = He **said** that he **wished** he **was** younger.
- I wish I didn't have to study = She **said** that she **wished** she **didn't** have to study.
- I wish you would work harder = She **said** that she **wished** I **would** work harder.
- It's time we went home = He **said** it **was** time we **went** home.
- I'd rather/sooner you went to the conference = She **said** that she'd rather/sooner I **went** to the conference.

# REPORTED SPEECH

## TENSES WHICH DO NOT CHANGE

Second conditional and third conditional forms do not change:

- If I had more time, I would do more translating = She **said** that if she had more time, she would do more translating.
- If I was/were younger, I would re-train = He **said** that if he was/were younger, he would re-train.
- If I had known, I would have visited you in hospital = He **said** that if he had known, he would have visited me in hospital.
- If I had had more time, I would have gone on holiday = She **told** me that if she had had more time, she would have gone on holiday.



# REPORTED SPEECH

## TENSES WHICH DO NOT CHANGE

We do not usually change **would**:

- I would like to stay = She **said** she **would like** to stay.
- I wouldn't like to be in your shoes/position = He **said** that he **wouldn't like** to be in my shoes/position.
- I would be interested in applying for the job = She **mentioned** that she **would be** interested in applying for the job.
- I would prefer not to go = She **said** that she **would prefer** not to go.
- I wouldn't be able to stay until the end of the meeting = He **admitted** that he **wouldn't be able** to stay until the end of the meeting.

# REPORTED SPEECH

## TENSES WHICH DO NOT CHANGE

We do not usually change **used to**:

- **I used to live in a huge house** = He **told** us that he **used to live** in a huge house.
- **I used to go fishing every weekend** = She **mentioned** that she **used to go** fishing every weekend.
- **I didn't use to care much about animal rights** = She **admitted** that she **didn't use to care** much about animal rights.
- **When I was little, I didn't use to like spaghetti** = He **said** that when he was little, he **didn't use to like** spaghetti.



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# GRAMMAR FOR IELTS

**Reported speech**

**MODAL VERBS**

# EXPLANATION

- It is possible to use **DIRECT SPEECH** or **REPORTED SPEECH** to report what somebody said.
- We can use **REPORTED SPEECH** to report **MODAL VERBS** such as **might, may, can** and **ought to**.
- In **REPORTED SPEECH**, **MODAL VERBS** sometimes need to change and sometimes do not change.
- We can sometimes use other structures to avoid using **MODAL VERBS** in **REPORTED SPEECH**.

# REPORTED SPEECH

## MODAL VERBS

Many modal verbs remain unchanged:

- The receipt **may/might/could be** in the office = She **said** that the receipt **may/might/could be** in the office.
- I **could help** = She **said** that she **could** help.
- The police **ought to take knife crime more seriously** = He **argued** that the police **ought to take** knife crime more seriously.
- Teachers **should do more to tackle bullying at school** = He **agreed** that teachers **should do** more to tackle bullying at school.
- I **would love to be a pilot** = She **said** that she **would love** to be a pilot.
- I **used to work in advertising** = She **told** us that she **used to work** in advertising.

# REPORTED SPEECH

## MODAL VERBS

Other modal verbs and semi-modals change:, especially when we refer to things which clearly happened in the past:

- It may/might/could be easier to go by train = He **said** that it may/might/could have been easier to go by train.
- You must/cannot be tired = She **said** he must/cannot have been tired.
- They ought to tell him = She **said** they ought to have told him.
- I am unable to help = She **regretted** that she was unable to help.
- You are not allowed/permitted/entitled to vote twice = She **made it clear** that we were not allowed/permitted/entitled to vote twice.
- I have/need to go = He **told** us that he had/needed to go.
- We managed to find it = They **said** they had managed to find it.



# REPORTED SPEECH

## MODAL VERBS

Other structures are possible with some modal verbs. Sometimes we can use an object pronoun and an infinitive:

- I'd be grateful if you could help = She asked me to help.
- You should be more careful = He advised/urged/told/warned me to be more careful.
- You ought to stop smoking = She urged/told/begged me to stop smoking.
- You must go with me = The police officer told me to go with him.



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# GRAMMAR FOR IELTS

**Reported speech**

**OTHER LANGUAGE WHICH  
CHANGES**

# EXPLANATION

- It is possible to use **DIRECT SPEECH** or **REPORTED SPEECH** to report what somebody said.
- When we use **REPORTED SPEECH**, we often have to change other words/phrases in the sentence, including **pronouns, possessive adjectives, this/these, expressions of time** and **expressions of place**.

# REPORTED SPEECH

## OTHER LANGUAGE WHICH CHANGES

Pronouns and possessive adjectives usually change to the third person:

- **We have forgotten our keys** = He said that **they** had forgotten **their** keys.
- **I hate my new job** = She told me that **she** hates/hated **her** new job.

These pronouns and possessive adjectives do not change when you report your own words:

- **I love my cat** = I told them that **I** love/loved **my** cat.
- **I will probably have to do it all myself** = I explained that **I** would probably have to do it all **myself**.
- **It's definitely not mine** = I said that it definitely wasn't **mine**.

# REPORTED SPEECH

## OTHER LANGUAGE WHICH CHANGES

**This** in time expressions often changes to **that**:

- **I have been in Moscow this week** = She said that she had been in Moscow **that** week.
- **I wasn't at work this morning** = She said she wasn't / hadn't been at work **that** morning.

**This** and **that** can change to **the** when they are used as adjectives:

- **I purchased this computer at your store** = I told her that I had purchased **the** computer at her store.
- **That shopkeeper was really rude** = He complained that **the** shopkeeper had been really rude.

# REPORTED SPEECH

## OTHER LANGUAGE WHICH CHANGES

When we use **this** as a pronoun, it often changes to **it**:

- **I find this intolerable** = She told us that she finds/found **it** intolerable.
- **This is one of the worst things I can remember** = She said **it** was one of the worst things she could remember.

When we use **these** as a pronoun, it often changes to **they/them**:

- **These are some of the worst conditions I have ever seen** = She admitted that **they** were some of the worst conditions she had ever seen.
- **I want to keep these** = He said that he wanted to keep **them**.



# REPORTED SPEECH

## OTHER LANGUAGE WHICH CHANGES

We often replace expressions of time:

- **I've eaten too much today** = He said he had eaten too much **that day**.
- **The parcel came yesterday** = She told me that the parcel had come **the day before / the previous day**.
- **It rained heavily the day before yesterday** = He told us that it had rained heavily **two days earlier**.
- **I'm going to Paris tomorrow** = She mentioned that she was going to Paris **the next day / the following day**.

# REPORTED SPEECH

## OTHER LANGUAGE WHICH CHANGES

We often replace expressions of time:

- **I am starting my course the day after tomorrow** = She said that she was starting her course **in two days' time**.
- **I will see her next week/year** = He mentioned that he would see her **the following week/year**.
- **I didn't have time last week/month/year** = She said that she hadn't had time **the previous week/month/year**.
- **I originally started working here a month/year ago** = She told me that she had originally started working there **the previous month/year**.

# REPORTED SPEECH

## OTHER LANGUAGE WHICH CHANGES

We usually replace **here** with **there** or a phrase which describes a place:

- **I have been living here since I was a child** = She told me that she had been living **there / in Tehran** since she was a child.
- **I hate working here** = She said that she hates/hated working **in that shop**.
- **I came here when I was a child** = He told me that he came / had come **to Germany** when he was a child.
- **The people here are friendly** = She said that the people **in the village where she lives** are/were friendly.



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# GRAMMAR FOR IELTS

## **Reported speech**

### USING INFINITIVES AND GERUNDS

# EXPLANATION

- It is possible to use **DIRECT SPEECH** or **REPORTED SPEECH** to report what somebody said.
- We can sometimes use verbs which are followed by an **INFINITIVE** or a **GERUND** form in **REPORTED SPEECH**.

# REPORTED SPEECH

## INFINITIVES AND GERUNDS

We can sometimes use infinitives in reported speech:

- I will pay you back soon = He **promised/agreed** to pay her back soon.
- I can help you = She **offered** to help him.
- We will not extend your contract = The manager **refused** to extend my contract.
- We will take legal action against you = They **threatened** to take legal action against us.
- Don't be stupid! = She **warned/told** him not to be stupid.
- Try it! = He **encouraged / begged / pleaded with** her to try it.



# REPORTED SPEECH

## INFINITIVES AND GERUNDS

We can sometimes use gerunds in reported speech:

- I think you're delighted that I'm leaving = She **accused** me **of** being delighted that she is/was leaving.
- You caused the problems = She **blamed** me **for** causing the problems.
- I'm certainly going to pay = She **insisted on** paying.
- I'm certainly going to be paid = She **insisted on** being paid. (This is a passive form)
- I'm so sorry I didn't come to the party = He **apologised for** not coming to the party / He **apologised for** not having come to the party.

# REPORTED SPEECH

## INFINITIVES AND GERUNDS

We can sometimes use gerunds in reported speech:

- I'm sorry I didn't know = He regretted not knowing / He regretted not having known.
- I took the money without asking = He admitted taking the money without asking / He admitted having taken the money without asking.
- I definitely didn't lose it = He denied losing it / He denied having lost it.
- I made the booking = She confirmed making the booking / She confirmed having made the booking.



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# GRAMMAR FOR IELTS

## **Reported speech**

### VERBS USED TO REPORT SPEECH

# EXPLANATION

- It is possible to use **DIRECT SPEECH** or **REPORTED SPEECH** to report what somebody said.
- Although we often use the verbs **to say** and **to tell** in **REPORTED SPEECH**, we can use a wide range of verbs to report what somebody said.

# VERBS USED IN REPORTED SPEECH

We can introduce reported speech with **to say** or **tell + object**:

- **I'm sorry** = He **said** he was sorry / He **told me** that he was sorry.
- **It's difficult** = She **said** it was difficult / She **told us** it was difficult.
- **The situation is getting worse** = She **said** that the situation was getting worse / She **told us** that the situation was getting worse.

It is possible to use **to say** with an object, but this is unusual:

- **I'm quite busy** = She **said to me** that she was quite busy.

# VERBS USED IN REPORTED SPEECH

We can use other verbs with reported speech:

- **It would be a waste of time and money** = They **argued** that it would be a waste of time and money.
- **It would be a good idea** = She **agreed** that it would be a good idea.
- **I organised the conference and I will deal with any problems** = He **explained** that he had organised the conference and **added** that he would deal with any problems.
- **I'm the cleverest person you are likely to meet** = He **boasted/claimed** that he was the cleverest person I was likely to meet.



# VERBS USED IN REPORTED SPEECH

We can use other verbs with reported speech:

- **I'm sorry** = He **stated** that he was sorry.
- **I do not agree** = He **replied/answered** that he did not agree.
- **I think there was a mistake** = She **suggested** that there had been a mistake.
- **I saw three men entering the building** = He **reported** that he had seen three men entering the building.
- **We used to live in China** = They **mentioned** that they used to live in China.
- **I am leaving** = She **informed** her boss that she was leaving.

# VERBS USED IN REPORTED SPEECH

We can use other verbs with reported speech:

- **It is totally unfair** = He **felt** that it was totally unfair.
- **I'm sorry I didn't say anything** = She **regretted** that she hadn't said anything.
- **The exam was too hard** = Many candidates **complained** that the exam had been too hard.
- **The food was awful** = They **grumbled** that the food was / had been awful.
- **The weather was too hot** = They **moaned** that the weather was / had been too hot.

# VERBS USED IN REPORTED SPEECH

We can use other verbs with reported speech:

- **The parcel will arrive tomorrow** = They **guaranteed** that the parcel would arrive the next day.
- **I definitely saw him** = She **indicated** that she had definitely seen him.
- **The food has been freshly prepared** = The chef **assured/promised** us that the food had been freshly prepared.
- **The experiment did not go very well** = Several scientists **observed/remarked** that the experiment had not gone very well.
- **I can't help you, because you haven't got a receipt** = The manager **pointed out** that she couldn't help us because we didn't have a receipt.

# VERBS USED IN REPORTED SPEECH

We can use other verbs with reported speech:

- **I have been offered a new job** = She **revealed** that she had been offered a new job.
- **I paid the money into the bank** = She **confirmed** that she had paid the money into the bank.
- **I did everything I could** = She **commented** that she had done everything she could.
- **The meeting will take place on Sunday** = They **announced** that the meeting would take place on Sunday.
- **It is entirely unacceptable** = The manager **made it clear** that it was entirely unacceptable.

# VERBS USED IN REPORTED SPEECH

We can use other verbs with reported speech:

- **I made a mistake** = He **acknowledged/accepted** that he had made a mistake.
- **I wasn't listening** = He **admitted** that he hadn't been listening.
- **I didn't receive your email** = The receptionist **denied** that he had received our email.
- **I wasn't even there** = He **insisted** that he hadn't even been there.
- **The company must pay compensation** = She **demand**ed that the company must pay compensation.
- **I had good intentions** = He **claimed** that he had had good intentions.



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# GRAMMAR FOR IELTS

**Reported speech**

**REPORTED QUESTIONS**

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# EXPLANATION

- It is possible to use **DIRECT SPEECH** or **REPORTED SPEECH** to report what somebody said.
- Sometimes we want to report **a question** and we can use **REPORTED SPEECH** for this.
- We can also use **REPORTED SPEECH** when we want to write about **combined questions and answers** and **combined statements and questions**.

# REPORTED QUESTIONS

Reported questions need the same changes as reported statements. The question word is placed before the subject, and the subject is placed before the main verb:

- **Where do you work?** = He **asked** me **where** I **worked**.
- **How much do you earn?** = They **asked** me **how much** I **earned**.
- **How many sharks have you seen?** = They **asked** me **how many** sharks I **had seen**.
- **When will you get back?** = I **asked** her **when** she **would get** back.
- **Why are you in hospital?** = She **asked** me **why** I **was** in hospital.

# REPORTED QUESTIONS

If there is no question word, we can put **if** before the subject:

- **Are you free?** = She **asked** me **if** I **was** free.
- **Do you understand?** = He **asked** me **if** I **understood**.
- **Was it expensive?** = He **wanted to know** **if** it **had been** expensive.
- **Have you ever been diving?** = She **asked** me **if** I **had** ever **been** diving.
- **Is there enough money?** = He **wanted to know** **if** **there was** enough money.

# REPORTED QUESTIONS

We can use **whether** instead of **if** when we want to emphasize a choice:

- **Do you want to stay or go?** = She **asked** me **whether** I **wanted** to stay or go.
- **Are you Canadian or British?** = She **wanted to know whether** I **was** Canadian or British.
- **Have you got a ticket?** = They **asked** me **whether (or not)** I **had** a ticket.

# REPORTED QUESTIONS

We can use **whether** instead of **if** when we want to emphasize a choice:

- **Are you going to apply for that job?** = He **asked** me **whether** I **was going** to apply for that job (or not).
- **Would you like the vegetarian option?** = The waiter **asked/inquired whether** (or not) we **wanted** the vegetarian option.
- **Should I wait?** = He **wondered whether** (or not) he **should wait** / He **wondered whether** (or not) to wait.

# REPORTED QUESTIONS

We usually use **whether** when we report questions which contain an **if-clause**:

- **If it rains, will you go to the picnic?** = She **wanted to know whether** we would go to the picnic if it rained.
- **If you have time, will you help me?** = He **asked whether** I would help him if I had time.
- **If you moved to Auckland, would you buy a house?** = The manager **wanted to know whether** we would buy a house if we moved to Auckland.
- **If you had seen a lion, would you have been frightened?** = He **wanted to know whether** I would have been frightened if I had seen a lion.

# REPORTED QUESTIONS

When we report a direct question starting with **shall**, there are several possibilities. It depends if the question is a suggestion, an offer or a request for instructions or advice:

- **Shall we meet in the restaurant?** = She **suggested** meeting in the restaurant / She **suggested** that we **should meet** in the restaurant. (a suggestion)
- **Shall I help you?** = He **offered** to help me / He **asked** whether he **should help** me. (an offer)
- **What shall I do?** = She **asked** what she **should do** (a request for instructions or advice)

# REPORTED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS TOGETHER

We can report **yes** and **no** with an auxiliary verb:

- **Are you tired? No** = She **asked** me if I was tired and I **said** I **wasn't**.
- **Have you been here long? Yes** = She **asked** me if I had been there long and I **told** her that I **had**.
- **Can you speak Portuguese? No** = They **asked** me if I could speak Portuguese and I **admitted** that I **couldn't**.
- **Will you come to the party? Yes** = They **asked** me if I would come to the party and I **promised** I **would**.



# REPORTED STATEMENTS AND QUESTIONS TOGETHER

Usually, if we want to report two different types of speech, each type needs its own verb:

- **I haven't got any money. Have you?** = He **said** that he **didn't have** any money and **asked** me if I **had** any/some.
- **I am busy. Go away!** = He **said** that he **was** busy and **told** me **to go** away.
- **I'm going shopping. Can I get you anything?** = She **mentioned** that she **was going** shopping and **wanted to know** whether I **wanted** anything.



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# GRAMMAR FOR IELTS

**Reported speech**

## STRATEGIES FOR IELTS

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# EXPLANATION

- It is possible to ask direct questions such as **When does the course start?** or **How much does the course cost?**
- However, we can make our questions more polite or more formal by writing them as **INDIRECT QUESTIONS.**
- We could write: **I would like to know when the course starts** or **I would be grateful if you could tell me how much the course costs.**
- This strategy can be effective in the IELTS General Writing Test: Task 1, especially for formal letters.

# REPORTED SPEECH STRATEGIES FOR IELTS WRITING

We can use this structure in IELTS General Writing Task 1 when we want to ask questions in a formal letter:

- **How much does the computer cost?** = **I would like to know how much the computer costs.**
- **Why has nobody responded to my email?** = **Please could you tell me why nobody has responded to my email?**
- **When will the course finish?** = **I wonder if you could let me know when the course will finish.**
- **Will the company give me a full refund?** = **I am writing to ask if/whether the company will give me a full refund.**

# EXPLANATION

- It is possible to ask direct questions such as **Should the death penalty be banned?** or **What can we do to tackle youth unemployment?**
- However, we can make our question more formal by writing them as **INDIRECT QUESTIONS**.
- We could write **It is worth discussing whether the death penalty should be banned** or **The question of what we can do to tackle youth unemployment is a significant and relevant one.**
- This strategy can be effective in **IELTS Writing TASK 2**.

# REPORTED SPEECH STRATEGIES FOR IELTS WRITING

We can use this structure in the thesis statement of IELTS Writing Task 2 essays when we do not give our opinion in the introduction:

- **Should cannabis be legalized?** = **The issue of** whether cannabis should be legalized **is worth considering.**
- **What can we do to reduce crime?** = **The question of** what we can do to reduce crime **perplexes/worries/concerns many of us.**
- **What is happiness? Why is it so difficult to define?** = **The issues of** what happiness is **and** why it is so difficult to define **have fascinated philosophers and non-experts alike for centuries.**
- **How much does technology benefit us?** = **The question of** how much technology benefits us **is worth debating.**



# REPORTED SPEECH STRATEGIES FOR IELTS WRITING

We can use this structure in the thesis statement of IELTS Writing Task 2 essays when we do not give our opinion in the introduction:

- **Should all employees receive equal salaries?** = **The question of** whether all employees should receive equal salaries **merits consideration.**
- **Why do some people commit crimes?** = **It is worth discussing** why some people commit crimes.
- **Why are societies becoming more similar to each other? Is this a good thing or a bad thing?** = **The questions of** why we are becoming more similar **and** whether this is a positive development **need to be answered.**



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# GRAMMAR FOR IELTS

## **Reported speech**

## REPORTING OTHER TYPES OF SENTENCE

# EXPLANATION

- It is possible to use **DIRECT SPEECH** or **REPORTED SPEECH** to report what somebody said.
- We can use **REPORTED SPEECH** for **requests, invitations, commands, advice, suggestions, exclamations and short comments.**

# REPORTED REQUESTS AND INVITATIONS

Sometimes we use **will/would/could** to request or invite:

- **Please will/would/could you come to the meeting?** = My boss **asked/told** me **to come/go** to the meeting / My boss **asked** me if I **would/could come/go** to the meeting.
- **Will/Would/Could you lend me some money?** = She **asked** me **to lend** her some money / She **asked** me if I **could/would lend** her some money.
- **Will/Would/Could you come round for dinner tomorrow?** = He **invited** me **to come/go** round for dinner the following day / He **wanted to know** if I **would/could come/go** round for dinner the following day.

# REPORTED COMMANDS, REQUESTS AND ADVICE

When we want to report commands, requests and advice, we often use a special verb with an object and an infinitive:

- **Be careful!** = He **advised/urged/told/warned** **us** **to be** careful.
- **Don't drink the water!** = She **advised/urged/told/warned** **us** **not to** drink the water.
- **Sit quietly!** = They **asked/begged/recommended/reminded** **us** **to sit** quietly.
- **Bring a friend!** = She **invited/encouraged** **us** **to bring** a friend.
- **Go away!** = They **commanded/ordered** **us** **to go** away.
- **Don't feed the animals!** = She **asked/begged/reminded/implored** **us** **not to feed** the animals.

# REPORTED SUGGESTIONS

We can report suggestions made with **let's**:

- **Let's sort it out later** = She **suggested** **sorting** it out later / She **suggested/said** that we **should sort** it out later.
- **Let's have a party** = She **suggested** **having** a party / She **suggested/said** that we **should have** a party.
- **Let's not bother doing anything** = She **suggested** not **doing** anything / She **suggested/said** that we **shouldn't do** anything.
- **Let's not go on holiday** = He **suggested** not **going** on holiday / He **suggested/said** that we **shouldn't go** on holiday.



# REPORTED EXCLAMATIONS AND SHORT COMMENTS

We can use special verbs for exclamations and short comments:

- **Thank you!** = She **thanked** him.
- **Good luck!** = I **wished** him good luck.
- **Happy Birthday!** = He **wished** her a happy birthday.
- **Get well soon!** = He **wished** her a speedy recovery.
- **Congratulations!** = They **congratulated** me.
- **Welcome back!** = She **welcomed** me back.



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## PREPARE for IELTS: Grammar Exercises

Last week you spoke to a hotel manager because you wanted to book conference facilities. Using reported speech, tell your colleague what the manager said:

### EXAMPLE

'We have three beautiful conference rooms'

She told me that they \_\_\_\_\_ three swimming pools.

ANSWER: She told me that they **had** three swimming pools.

1. 'We have three beautiful conference rooms'  
She told me that they \_\_\_\_\_ three beautiful conference rooms.
2. 'We are renovating one of them at the moment'  
She said that they \_\_\_\_\_ renovating one of them at the moment
3. 'We can give you a discount if you book two or more days'  
She mentioned that they \_\_\_\_\_ give us a discount if we \_\_\_\_\_ two or more days.
4. Recently, we have had to put the prices up'  
She admitted that recently they \_\_\_\_\_ to put the prices up.
5. 'I will send you a confirmatory email as soon as the payment has been received'  
She promised that she \_\_\_\_\_ send us a confirmatory email as soon as the payment \_\_\_\_\_ received.

### ANSWERS

1. 'We have three beautiful conference rooms'  
She told me that they **had** three beautiful conference rooms
2. 'We are renovating one of them at the moment'  
She said that they **were** renovating one of them at the moment
3. 'We can give you a discount if you book two or more days'  
She mentioned that they **could** give us a discount if we **booked** two or more days.
4. Recently, we have had to put the prices up'  
She admitted that recently they **had had** to put the prices up.
5. 'I will send you a confirmatory email as soon as the payment has been received'  
She promised that she **would** send us a confirmatory email as soon as the payment **had been** received.

## PREPARE for IELTS: Grammar Exercises

Change the sentences in direct speech into reported speech:

EXAMPLE:

DIRECT SPEECH: I want to go home.

REPORTED SPEECH: She said that \_\_\_\_\_

ANSWER: She said that **she wanted to go home**

1. DIRECT SPEECH: It doesn't matter  
REPORTED SPEECH: She said that \_\_\_\_\_
2. DIRECT SPEECH: The conference room has all the facilities you need  
REPORTED SPEECH: She said that \_\_\_\_\_
3. DIRECT SPEECH: I'm thinking about training to be a dentist.  
REPORTED SPEECH: She said that \_\_\_\_\_
4. DIRECT SPEECH: I was living in Australia during the whole of 1997  
REPORTED SPEECH: She said that \_\_\_\_\_
5. DIRECT SPEECH: I have never met such an unpleasant person  
REPORTED SPEECH: She said that \_\_\_\_\_
6. DIRECT SPEECH: I wish I was younger  
REPORTED SPEECH: She said that \_\_\_\_\_
7. DIRECT SPEECH: I've been working hard all morning  
REPORTED SPEECH: She said that \_\_\_\_\_
8. DIRECT SPEECH: I didn't know the weather was going to be so bad.  
REPORTED SPEECH: She said that \_\_\_\_\_
9. DIRECT SPEECH: I won't tell anybody  
REPORTED SPEECH: She said that \_\_\_\_\_
10. DIRECT SPEECH: The situation will improve soon.  
REPORTED SPEECH: She said that \_\_\_\_\_

### ANSWERS

1. She said that **it didn't matter**
2. She said that **the conference room had all the facilities we needed**
3. She said that **she was thinking about training to become a dentist.**

4. She said that she was / had been living in Australia during the whole of 1997.
5. She said that she had never met such an unpleasant person.
6. She said that she wished she was younger.
7. She said that she had been working hard all morning.
8. She said that she didn't know / hadn't known that the weather was going to be so bad.
9. She said that she wouldn't tell anybody.
10. She said that the situation would improve soon.

## PREPARE for IELTS: Grammar Exercises

Change the sentences in direct speech into reported speech:

EXAMPLE:

DIRECT SPEECH: I want to go home.

REPORTED SPEECH: She said that \_\_\_\_\_

ANSWER: She said that **she wanted to go home**

1. DIRECT SPEECH: I won't be coming to the party  
REPORTED SPEECH: She said that \_\_\_\_\_
2. DIRECT SPEECH: If I have time, I will come to the meeting  
REPORTED SPEECH: She said that \_\_\_\_\_
3. DIRECT SPEECH: I had never seen her before.  
REPORTED SPEECH: She said that \_\_\_\_\_
4. DIRECT SPEECH: We have forgotten our umbrellas.  
REPORTED SPEECH: She said that \_\_\_\_\_
5. DIRECT SPEECH: I have been to Paris this week.  
REPORTED SPEECH: She said that \_\_\_\_\_
6. DIRECT SPEECH: If I had known, I wouldn't have come.  
REPORTED SPEECH: She said that \_\_\_\_\_
7. DIRECT SPEECH: I used to live in that street.  
REPORTED SPEECH: She said that \_\_\_\_\_
8. DIRECT SPEECH: This is one of the worst days of my life  
REPORTED SPEECH: She said that \_\_\_\_\_
9. DIRECT SPEECH: I want to keep these.  
REPORTED SPEECH: She said that \_\_\_\_\_
10. DIRECT SPEECH: I will see you next week  
REPORTED SPEECH: She said that \_\_\_\_\_

ANSWERS

1. She said that she wouldn't be coming to the party.
2. She said that if she had time, she would come to the meeting.
3. She said that she had never seen her before.
4. She said that they had forgotten their umbrellas.
5. She said that she had been to Paris that week
6. She said that if she had known, she wouldn't have come.
7. She said that she used to live in that street.
8. She said that it was one of the worst days of her life.
9. She said that she wanted to keep them.
10. She said that she would see us the following week.

## PREPARE for IELTS: Grammar Exercises

Change the sentences in direct speech into reported speech:

EXAMPLE:

DIRECT SPEECH: I want to go home.

REPORTED SPEECH: She said that \_\_\_\_\_

ANSWER: She said that **she wanted to go home**

1. DIRECT SPEECH: What's your name?

REPORTED SPEECH: She asked me \_\_\_\_\_

2. DIRECT SPEECH: Why are you in hospital?

REPORTED SPEECH: She asked me \_\_\_\_\_

3. DIRECT SPEECH: What time will you get back?

REPORTED SPEECH: She asked me \_\_\_\_\_

4. DIRECT SPEECH: It might not be too difficult

REPORTED SPEECH: She said that \_\_\_\_\_

5. DIRECT SPEECH: Do you understand?

REPORTED SPEECH: She asked me \_\_\_\_\_

6. DIRECT SPEECH: The police ought to take crime more seriously

REPORTED SPEECH: She said that \_\_\_\_\_

7. DIRECT SPEECH: Do you want cheese or meat?

REPORTED SPEECH: She asked me \_\_\_\_\_

8. DIRECT SPEECH: Would you like the vegetarian option?

REPORTED SPEECH: She asked me \_\_\_\_\_

9. DIRECT SPEECH: Shall we meet later?

REPORTED SPEECH: She suggested \_\_\_\_\_

10. DIRECT SPEECH: I haven't got any money. Have you?

REPORTED SPEECH: She said that \_\_\_\_\_ and asked me \_\_\_\_\_

### ANSWERS

1. She asked me **what my name was**

2. She asked me **why I was in hospital**



3. She asked me **what time I would get back**
4. She said that **it might not be too difficult**
5. She asked me **if I understood**
6. She said that **the police ought to take crime more seriously**
7. She asked me **if I wanted cheese or meat**
8. She asked me **if I would like the vegetarian option**
9. She suggested **meeting later** / she suggested **that we met later**
10. She said that **she didn't have any money and asked me if I had (any)**

## PREPARE for IELTS: Grammar Exercises

Complete each sentence with an appropriate reporting verb:

1. We all ag\_\_\_\_\_ that it would be a great idea.
2. She ex\_\_\_\_\_ that she hadn't attended the meeting because her flight had been cancelled.
3. He men\_\_\_\_\_ that he had never been to Amsterdam and ad\_\_\_\_\_ that he really didn't want to go.
4. She com\_\_\_\_\_ that the facilities were incredibly poor.
5. They gu\_\_\_\_\_ that the parcel would arrive the next day.
6. The company conf\_\_\_\_\_ that they had received the payment.
7. He p\_\_\_\_\_ o\_\_\_\_\_ that he wouldn't be able to get into the house because he didn't have a key.
8. They ack\_\_\_\_\_ that mistakes had been made and acc\_\_\_\_\_ that things should have been done differently.
9. They cl\_\_\_\_\_ that they had never wanted to cause any problems.
10. She de\_\_\_\_\_ that she had stolen the money.

### ANSWERS

1. We all **agreed** that it would be a great idea.
2. She **explained** that she hadn't attended the meeting because her flight had been cancelled.
3. He **mentioned** that he had never been to Amsterdam and **admitted** that he really didn't want to go.
4. She **complained** that the facilities were incredibly poor.
5. They **guessed** that the parcel would arrive the next day.
6. The company **confirmed** that they had received the payment.
7. He **pointed out** that he wouldn't be able to get into the house because he didn't have a key.
8. They **acknowledged** that mistakes had been made and **accepted** that things should have been done differently.
9. They **claimed** that they had never wanted to cause any problems.
10. She **denied** that she had stolen the money.

## PREPARE for IELTS: Grammar Exercises

Look at the following direct questions and turn them into indirect questions:

1. How much does the computer cost?  
**I would like to know...**
2. Why has nobody responded to my email?  
**Please could you tell me...?**
3. When will the course finish?  
**I wonder if you could let me know...**
4. Will the company give me a full refund?  
**I am writing to ask...**
5. Will I need to buy anything else?  
**I would like to know...**

### ANSWERS

1. How much does the computer cost?  
I would like to know **how much the computer costs.**
2. Why has nobody responded to my email?  
Please could you tell me **why nobody has responded to my email?**
3. When will the course finish?  
I wonder if you could let me know **when the course will finish.**
4. Will the company give me a full refund?  
I am writing to ask **if/whether the company will give me a full refund.**
6. Will I need to buy anything else?  
I would like to know **if/whether I will need anything else.**

## PREPARE for IELTS: Grammar Exercises

Look at the following direct questions and turn them into indirect questions:

1. Should cannabis be legalized?  
The issue of \_\_\_\_\_ is worth considering.
2. What can we do to reduce crime?  
The question of \_\_\_\_\_ to reduce crime perplexes many of us.
3. Why do some people commit crimes?  
It is worth discussing \_\_\_\_\_ crimes.
4. Should all employees receive equal salaries?  
The question of \_\_\_\_\_ equal salaries merits consideration.
5. What is happiness? Why is it so difficult to define?  
The issues of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ to define have fascinated philosophers and non-experts alike for centuries.

## ANSWERS

1. Should cannabis be legalized?  
The issue of **whether cannabis should be legalized** is worth considering.
2. What can we do to reduce crime?  
The question of **what we can do to reduce crime** perplexes many of us.
3. Why do some people commit crimes?  
It is worth discussing **why some people commit crimes**.
4. Should all employees receive equal salaries?  
The question of **whether all employees should receive equal salaries** merits consideration.
5. What is happiness? Why is it so difficult to define?  
The issues of **what happiness is** and **why it is so difficult to define** have fascinated philosophers and non-experts alike for centuries.