

## Reported speech 2

A

It is not always necessary to change the verb in reported speech. If the situation is *still the same*, you do not need to change the verb to the past. For example:

- direct* Paul said 'My new job **is** boring.'
- reported* Paul said that his new job **is** boring.  
(The situation is still the same. His job **is** still boring now.)
- direct* Helen said 'I **want** to go to Canada next year.'
- reported* Helen told me that **she wants** to go to Canada next year.  
(Helen still wants to go to Canada next year.)

You can also change the verb to the past:

- Paul said that his new job **was** boring.
- Helen told me that she **wanted** to go to Canada next year.

But if the situation has changed or finished, you *must* use a past verb:

- Paul left the room suddenly. He said **he had** to go. (*not* has to go)

B

You need to use a past form when there is a difference between what was said and what is really true.

For example:

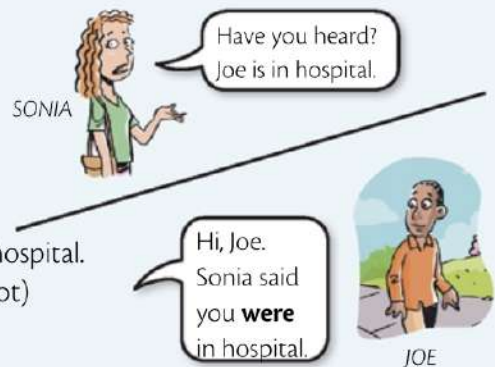
You met Sonia a few days ago.

She said: **Joe is in hospital.**

Later that day you meet Joe in the street. You say:

Hi, Joe. I didn't expect to see you. Sonia said you **were** in hospital.

(*not* 'Sonia said you are in hospital', because clearly he is not)



C

### Say and tell

If you say *who* somebody is talking to, use **tell**:

- Sonia **told me** that you were in hospital. (*not* Sonia said me)
- What did you **tell the police**? (*not* say the police)

Otherwise use **say**:

- Sonia **said** that you were in hospital. (*not* Sonia told that ...)
- What did you **say**?

But you can 'say something **to** somebody':

- Ann **said** goodbye **to** me and left. (*not* Ann said me goodbye)
- What did you **say to** the police?



D

### Tell/ask somebody to do something

We also use the infinitive (**to do / to be** etc.) in reported speech, especially with **tell** and **ask** (for orders and requests):

- direct* 'Drink plenty of water,' the doctor said to me.
- reported* The doctor **told me to drink** plenty of water.
- direct* 'Don't be late,' I said to Joe.
- reported* I **told Joe not to be** late.
- direct* 'Can you help me, please,' Jackie said to me.
- reported* Jackie **asked me to help** her.

You can also say 'Somebody **said (not) to** do something':

- Paul **said not to worry** about him. (*but not* Paul said me)

**48.1** Here are some things that Sarah said to you:



I've never been to the United States.

I don't have any brothers or sisters.

I can't drive.

I don't like fish.

Jane has a very well-paid job.

I'm working tomorrow evening.

Jane is a friend of mine.

~~Dave is lazy.~~

But later Sarah says something different to you. What do you say?

Sarah	You
1 Dave works very hard.	But you said he was lazy.
2 Let's have fish for dinner.	But .....
3 I'm going to buy a car.	.....
4 Jane is always short of money.	.....
5 My sister lives in Paris.	.....
6 I think New York is a great place.	.....
7 Let's go out tomorrow evening.	.....
8 I've never spoken to Jane.	.....

**48.2** Complete the sentences with **say** or **tell** (in the correct form). Use only one word each time.

- Ann said goodbye to me and left.
- ..... us about your holiday. Did you have a nice time?
- Don't just stand there! ..... something!
- I wonder where Sue is. She..... she would be here at 8 o'clock.
- Dan ..... me that he was bored with his job.
- The doctor ..... that I should rest for at least a week.
- Don't ..... anybody what I ..... It's a secret just between us.
- 'Did she ..... you what happened?' 'No, she didn't..... anything to me.'
- Gary couldn't help me. He..... me to ask Chris.
- Gary couldn't help me. He..... to ask Chris.

**48.3** The following sentences are direct speech:

Don't wait for me if I'm late.

Mind your own business.

Don't worry, Sue.

Please slow down!

Can you open your bag, please?

Could you get me a paper?

~~Hurry up!~~

Will you marry me?

Do you think you could give me a hand, Tom?

Now choose one of these to complete each of the sentences below. Use **reported speech**.

- Will was taking a long time to get ready, so I told him to hurry up .....
- Sarah was driving too fast, so I asked .....
- Sue was nervous about the situation. I told .....
- I couldn't move the piano alone, so I .....
- The security guard looked at me suspiciously and .....
- Tom was going to the shop, so I .....
- The man started asking me personal questions, so I .....
- John was in love with Marianne, so he .....
- I didn't want to delay Helen, so I .....