

Reported Speech

Free B1-B2 Grammar Worksheet PDF | Britfluency

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. Grammar focus

Structure	Use and examples
Direct speech and reported speech	Use reported speech to tell someone what another person said. Direct speech uses the speaker's exact words. Example: Direct: "I am tired." Reported: She said that she was tired.
Backshift after a past reporting verb	After said, told or asked, the verb often moves one step back. Present simple becomes past simple. Present continuous becomes past continuous. Past simple and present perfect often become past perfect. Will becomes would. Can becomes could. Must usually becomes had to.
Say and tell	Use say without an object: She said that she was busy. Use tell with an object: She told me that she was busy. Do not say: She told that she was busy. Do not say: She said me that she was busy.
Pronouns and time words	Change pronouns and time words so the meaning is clear. Examples: I -> he/she, my -> his/her, today -> that day, tomorrow -> the next day, yesterday -> the day before, here -> there.
Reported questions	Use normal statement word order after asked. Do not use question word order. Examples: She asked where I lived. He asked if I was ready. Use if or whether for yes/no questions.
Requests and commands	Use asked/told + object + to + base verb. Use not to for negative requests or commands. Examples: She asked me to wait. He told us not to touch the screen.
Important note	In this worksheet, use standard backshift after past reporting verbs. In real English, backshift is sometimes optional when the information is still true, but this is better taught after students control the main patterns.

Core idea: reported speech usually changes the verb tense, pronouns, time words and word order. Use say, tell and ask carefully.

2. Choose the correct form

1. She said she was / is tired.
2. Tom told me he will / would call the next day.
3. They said they finished / had finished the work.
4. She asked where I lived / did I live.
5. He asked if I was ready / was I ready.
6. Mum told me to not / not to be late.
7. Jack said he can't / couldn't come to the meeting.
8. Anna told / said me that she needed help.
9. He said he lost / had lost his wallet the day before.
10. The teacher asked us if we knew / did we know the answer.

3. Match the sentence to the grammar reason

Match the sentence to the grammar reason. Two reasons are not used.

Sentence	Reason
1. She said that she was busy.	A. Negative reported request or command
2. He told me that he would email later.	B. Present simple backshifted to past simple
3. They asked if I needed help.	C. Will changed to would
4. The manager told us not to leave early.	D. Reported wh-question
5. Sara asked where I worked.	E. Past simple or present perfect changed to past perfect
6. Tom told Anna that he had finished the form.	F. Yes/no reported question with if
	G. Direct speech with exact words
	H. Reported speech with no backshift

4. Correct the mistakes

Correct the mistake in each sentence. More than one correct answer may be possible.

1. She said she is tired.

2. Tom told that he was busy.

3. He asked where did I live.

4. She asked me wait outside.

5. They said they will arrive late.

6. He told us don't touch the screen.

7. Anna asked if was I ready.

8. Mark said he has lost his keys.

5. Complete the mini-dialogues

1. A: What did Liam say?

B: He said he _____ (be) tired.

2. A: What did Nina tell you?

B: She told me she _____ (call) the next day.

3. A: What did the teacher ask?

B: She asked if we _____ (understand) the question.

4. A: What did Dad say about the tickets?

B: He said he _____ (buy) them the day before.

5. A: What did Maria ask you to do?

B: She asked me _____ (send) the file.

6. A: What did the manager tell everyone?

B: He told everyone _____ (not use) the lift.

6. Rewrite the sentences

Rewrite each direct-speech sentence as reported speech. Do not change the meaning.

1. Emma said, "I live near the station."

2. Jake told me, "I will send you the details tomorrow."

3. Lily said, "I have finished my homework."

4. Ben asked me, "Can you help me?"

5. The teacher told us, "Do not write in pencil."

6. Olivia asked me, "Where do you work?"

7. Direct speech, question or request?

Choose the reported-speech sentence that best matches the direct speech.

Direct speech	Correct reported speech
1. "I am busy."	A. She said she was busy. / B. She said was she busy.
2. "Do you need help?"	A. He asked if I needed help. / B. He asked did I need help.
3. "Please open the window."	A. She asked me that I opened the window. / B. She asked me to open the window.
4. "Don't be late."	A. He told us not to be late. / B. He told us don't be late.
5. "I saw him yesterday."	A. She said she had seen him the day before. / B. She said she had seen him the next day.
6. "I need your advice."	A. Alex told me that he needed my advice. / B. Alex said me that he needed my advice.

8. Speaking practice

1. What is something a teacher once told you that you still remember?
2. Have you ever reported bad news to someone? What did you say?
3. What questions do people usually ask when they meet a new colleague or neighbour?
4. What advice would you report to a friend who wanted to improve their English?
5. Has anyone ever asked you to do something strange or difficult?
6. What did people tell you when you were choosing your career or studies?
7. What is a promise someone made to you and kept?
8. What warning do parents often give their children?

9. Write your own sentences

1. Write one reported statement with said that.

2. Write one reported statement with told someone that.

3. Write one reported wh-question.

4. Write one reported yes/no question with if or whether.

5. Write one reported request or command with to or not to.

10. Vocabulary and reported speech sentence practice

Choose five prompts from the word bank. Write one reported-speech sentence for each prompt. Use said that, told someone that, asked if/whether, asked where/when/why/how, or told/asked someone to/not to.

Word bank: tired, busy, help, address, late, ready, wait, screen

Prompt	Your reported-speech sentence

11. Error-checking challenge

Read the paragraph. Find and correct seven mistakes with reported speech.

Yesterday, I met a new neighbour. She said she is tired after moving house and told me she will start unpacking the next day. I asked her where did she live before. She said she has lived in Cardiff for five years. Then she asked me do I know any good cafés nearby. I told her that there was one near the station. Before she left, she asked me send her the address and told me don't forget.

12. Useful reminders

Do not say	Say	Why?
She said she is tired.	She said she was tired.	After a past reporting verb, present simple usually changes to past simple.
He asked where did I live.	He asked where I lived.	Reported questions use normal statement word order.
She said me she was busy.	She told me she was busy. / She said she was busy.	Tell needs an object. Say does not take this object pattern.
He told us don't wait.	He told us not to wait.	Use told/asked + object + not to + base verb for negative commands.
She asked me wait.	She asked me to wait.	Use asked + object + to + base verb for requests.

Answer Key

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2. Choose the correct form

1. was - backshift after said.
2. would - will changes to would.
3. had finished - present perfect/past simple often changes to past perfect.
4. lived - reported questions use normal statement word order.
5. I was ready - reported yes/no questions use if + subject + verb.
6. not to - use told + object + not to + base verb.
7. couldn't - can changes to could.
8. told - use told me, not said me.
9. had lost - past action reported after said.
10. if we knew - reported yes/no question.

3. Match the sentence to the grammar reason

1. B - Present simple backshifted to past simple.
 2. C - Will changed to would.
 3. F - Yes/no reported question with if.
 4. A - Negative reported request or command.
 5. D - Reported wh-question.
 6. E - Past simple or present perfect changed to past perfect.
- G and H are not used.

4. Correct the mistakes

Teacher note: accept any grammatical correction that preserves the meaning.

1. She said she was tired.
2. Tom said that he was busy. / Tom told me that he was busy.
3. He asked where I lived.
4. She asked me to wait outside.
5. They said they would arrive late.
6. He told us not to touch the screen.
7. Anna asked if I was ready.
8. Mark said he had lost his keys.

Answer Key continued

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5. Complete the mini-dialogues

1. was.
2. would call.
3. understood.
4. had bought.
5. to send.
6. not to use.

6. Rewrite the sentences

1. Emma said that she lived near the station.
2. Jake told me that he would send me the details the next day.
3. Lily said that she had finished her homework.
4. Ben asked me if/whether I could help him.
5. The teacher told us not to write in pencil.
6. Olivia asked me where I worked.

7. Direct speech, question or request?

1. A - reported statement with backshift.
2. A - yes/no reported question with if.
3. B - reported request with to + base verb.
4. A - negative reported command with not to.
5. A - yesterday changes to the day before.
6. A - tell + object + that-clause.

11. Error-checking challenge

Yesterday, I met a new neighbour. She said she was tired after moving house and told me she would start unpacking the next day. I asked her where she had lived before. She said she had lived in Cardiff for five years. Then she asked me if/whether I knew any good cafés nearby. I told her that there was one near the station. Before she left, she asked me to send her the address and told me not to forget.

Teacher note

For B1-B2 learners, focus on standard backshift, pronoun and time-word changes, reported questions and reported requests or commands. Do not overload the lesson with optional no-backshift, advanced reporting verbs or mixed-tense reporting until students control the main patterns.