

Grammar Explanations

1. An **indirect speech statement** reports what a speaker said without using the exact words. The word **that** can introduce the indirect statement.

► **BE CAREFUL!** Use **say** as the reporting verb when the listener is not mentioned. Do not use **tell**.

Examples

DIRECT SPEECH

- "It's a great dress," he said.

INDIRECT SPEECH

- He told her **that it was a great dress**.
 ■ He told her **it was a great dress**.
 ■ He **said** that it was a great dress.
 NOT He ~~told that~~ it was a great dress.

2. When the **reporting verb** is in the **simple past tense**, the verb in the indirect speech statement is often in a different tense from the verb in the direct speech statement.

DIRECT SPEECH

Simple present

INDIRECT SPEECH

→ **Simple past**

Present progressive

→ **Past progressive**

Simple past

→ **Past perfect**

Present perfect

→ **Past perfect**

DIRECT SPEECH

He said, "It's great."

"I'm leaving."

"I made it."

He said to her,
"I've never lied."

INDIRECT SPEECH

He said it **was** great.

She said she **was leaving**.

He said that he **had made** it.

He told her that
he **had** never **lied**.

3. In indirect speech the **verb tense change** is **optional** when reporting:

- a. something someone has **just said**
 b. something that is **still true**
 c. a **general truth** or **scientific law**

A: What did you just say?

B: I said I'm tired. OR I said I **was** tired.

- Rick said the bank **wants** a check.
 ■ Rick said the bank **wanted** a check.
 ■ She said that everyone **lies** sometime.
 ■ She said that everyone **lied** sometime.

4. When the **reporting verb** is in the **present tense**, do not change the verb tense in indirect speech.

- "I **run** a mile every day."
 ■ She **says** that she **runs** a mile every day.

5. **REMEMBER!** Change pronouns, time expressions, **this**, and **here** in indirect speech to keep the speaker's original meaning.

- Ann told Rick, "I bought **this** dress **here**."
 ■ Ann told Rick that **she** had bought **that** dress **there**.

Check it out!

For a list of common reporting verbs, see Appendix 13 on page 340.

For a list of common time word changes in indirect speech, see Appendix 14 on page 340.