

## INDIRECT SPEECH

### Indirect Statement

1. Use said when the person spoken to is not mentioned. Use told when the person spoken to is mentioned.

e.g. "I may go," he said = He said that he might go.  
"I may go," he said to me = He told me that he might go.

2. When the Reporting Verb is in a Past Tense, the tenses which follow must be in the Past form.

e.g. He says that he will go if his father permits him.  
He said that he would go if his father permitted him.

The Present & Past forms are illustrated below from the Verb go.

#### Present

Go, goes

Is (am, are) going

Shall (will) go

May go

Has (have) gone

Shall (will) have gone

May have gone

#### Past

Went

Was (were) going

Should (would) go

Might go

Had gone

Should (would) have gone

Might have gone

3. When the Reporting Verb is in the Past Tense, the following words have also to be changed:-

This & These

Now

Today

Yesterday

Tomorrow

Here

That & Those

Then

That day

The previous day

The following day

There

4. The Pronoun I, me, my, mine, we, us, our, ours have to be changed (or left unchanged) according to the person speaking, while you, your & yours have to be changed according to the person spoken to.

e.g. "I have lost my book," I said.  
I said that I had lost my book.

I have lost my book," he said.  
He said that he had lost his book.

"You must do your work," I said to them.  
I told them that they must do their work.

"You must do your work," he said to me.  
He told me that I must do my work.

**Note:** Never change the person of the speaker or the person spoken to.

### Indirect Questions

1. Use ask or inquire for the Reporting Verb. Never put a Question Mark.

e.g. "Who are you?" he said to me.  
He asked me who I was.  
He inquired of me who I was.

2. When the answer to the question can be "Yes" or "No", use if in the Indirect.

e.g. "Will you go?" I said to him.  
I asked him if he would go.

3. Never write that who, that where etc. The word that is left out.

e.g. "Where do you live?" I said to him.  
I asked him where he lived.

4. The order of the words is the same as in a Statement and not a Question.

e.g. "Where are you going?" I asked.  
I asked where he was going.

"Why have you come late?" I asked.  
I asked why he had come late.

"Do you understand?" I asked.  
I asked if he understood.

5. "Yes" and "No" are put into Indirect as follows:  
"Do you like hockey?" I asked him. "Yes," he replied.  
I asked him if he liked hockey. He replied that he did.  
(He replied in the affirmative.  
"Will you go?" I asked them. "No," they replied.  
I asked them if they would go. They replied that they would not. (They replied in the negative.)

6. Do the second part of the sentence first in cases such as:  
"When you reach home, what will you do?" I said to him.  
I asked him what he would do when he reached home.  
"If you feel ill, go to the doctor," I said to him.  
I told him to go to the doctor if he felt ill.

### **Indirect Commands, Requests & Advice**

1. Use told, ordered, requested, begged or advised for the Reporting Verb, e.g.

"Hurry up," I said to them. I told them to hurry up.  
"Please don't be late," he said to me.  
He begged me not to be late.  
"Work harder," said the teacher.  
The teacher advised me to work harder.

2. Use to with the Verb, e.g.  
"Bring your books," I said to them.  
I told them to bring their books.

3. The person spoken to must be put in, even when not given in the Direct, e.g.

"Spare me," said the prisoner.= The prisoner begged them to spare him.  
"Don't wait," I said = I told him not to wait.

**Note:** Not comes before to.

## Indirect Exclamations

“What a pity!” he exclaimed = He exclaimed that it was a pity.

“How cold it is!” I said = I exclaimed that it was very cold.

“Alas! We are lost!” he said = He exclaimed sorrowfully that they were lost.

**Note:** The words what, how, alas are left out in the Indirect which becomes merely a statement.

## The Person Addressed

“Friends, nothing can save us,” he said.

= Addressing them as ‘friends’, he said that nothing could save them.

“My child, where do you live?” asked the old man.

= Addressing her as ‘my child’, the old man asked where she lived.

## Special Cases

“Let’s go for a swim,” I said = I suggested that we should go for a swim.

“May I go, sir?” I asked = I asked respectfully if I might go.

## Examples of Continuous Passages

1. He said to me, “It is so hot that I can’t sleep properly. I shall be thankful when the monsoon starts. I am sure everyone feels the same as I do. If the dry weather continues, there will be a famine.”

He told me that it was so hot that he could not sleep properly. He would be thankful when the monsoon started. He was sure everyone felt the same as he did. If the dry weather continued, there would be a famine.

2. “You’re an idle fellow,” I said to him. “Why don’t you work for your living as I do? You ought to be ashamed to beg for money. Be off at once or I shall call the police.”

I told him that he was an idle fellow and asked why he did not work for his living as I did. I added that he ought to be ashamed to beg for money, and I warned him to be off or I should call the police.

3. "What a stupid creature you are!" said the man to the ass. "Do you think the people are bowing down to you? They are bowing down to the image which is on your back. Move on or I shall beat you soundly."

The man exclaimed to the ass that it was a stupid creature and asked if it thought the people were bowing down to it. He added that they were bowing down to the image which was on its back. He ordered it to move on or he would beat it soundly.

4. "If your Majesty offers as a sacrifice to God the most valuable thing you possess, your son's life will be spared," said the wise man. "Nothing is more dear to me than my own life," said Babur. "How gladly would I sacrifice it if I might thus save my son!". "Your Majesty," said the wise man, "You misunderstand my meaning. Do not sacrifice your life, but give as an offering the most precious jewels in your possession. If you die, how will your subjects live?"

The wise man said that if his Majesty offered as a sacrifice to God the most valuable thing he possessed, his son's life would be spared. Babur replied that nothing was more dear to him than his own life. He exclaimed that he would gladly sacrifice it if he might thus save his son. The wise man, addressing him as 'Your Majesty', said that he misunderstood his meaning. He begged him not to sacrifice his life but to give as an offering the most valuable jewels in his possession. He asked how his subjects would live if he died.