



Minutes of meeting

Charlene said that the aim of the meeting was to plan the product launch.

She asked if everyone had received her report.

Mike said he couldn't download it.

Charlene said she'd send him another copy.

Presentation

We can use direct speech or reported speech to say what someone else said.

Direct speech: *She said, 'I'll send you a copy.'* Reported speech: *She said that she'd send him a copy.*

We can leave out *that*, especially in informal, spoken contexts: *She said she'd send it. / She said that she'd send it.*

When we use reported speech, we normally change the tense of the verb.

Direct speech	Reported speech
Present simple: <i>Charlene said, 'I want a meeting..'</i>	Past simple: <i>Charlene said she wanted a meeting.</i>
Present continuous: <i>Maria said, 'We're having a meeting.'</i>	Past continuous: <i>Maria said they were having a meeting.</i>
Past simple: <i>He said, 'I emailed you.'</i>	Past perfect: <i>He said he had emailed her.</i>
Present perfect simple: <i>Mike said, 'I have just read the report.'</i>	Past perfect simple: <i>Mike said he had read the report.</i>
will: <i>She said, 'I'll send you a copy.'</i>	would: <i>She said she would send him a copy.</i>
can: <i>Mike said, 'I can't download it.'</i>	could: <i>Mike said he couldn't download it .</i>

might and would

Might and *would* don't change in reported speech.

'I might be late.' → *He said he might be late.*

'We'd need a report.' → *She said they'd need a report.*

Other changes

We often need to change pronouns and words about time and place. The changes depend on the time and person reporting the speech.

Last week: *Seb said, 'We'll see you here tomorrow.'* → *Seb said **they'd** see **me** **there** **the next day**.*

Today: *Seb said, 'We'll send it there tomorrow.'* → *Seb said they'll send it there tomorrow.*

Questions

We normally use the verb *ask* to report questions, and we use normal word order (subject before verb). We don't add *do*, *does* or *did*.

'Where do you work?' → *She asked where I worked.*

To report a *yes/no* question, we add *if* or *whether* before the subject in the question.

'Did everyone receive my report?' → *She asked if/whether everyone had received her report.*

Exercises

1 Put the words in the correct order.

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1 new car / said / he / that / He / loved / his | 5 me / see / tomorrow / she'd / said / Sally |
| 2 said / they / were / They / at three / arriving | 6 lived / I / Peter / me / asked / where |
| 3 she's / a new / applied / said / for / job / She | 7 said / I / that / not enjoy / brother / the film / |
| 4 if / I / ate / asked / meat / her / she | My / might |

2 Rewrite the sentences from Exercise 1 as direct speech.

- 1 He said, 'I love my new car.'
- 2 They said, 'We'
- 3 She said, 'I'
- 4 I asked her, 'Do?'
- 5 Sally said, 'I'
- 6 Peter asked me, 'Where?'
- 7 My brother said, 'You'

3 Write the direct speech as reported speech.

- 1 She said, 'I want to start.'
She said that she wanted to start.
- 2 They said, 'We're waiting outside.'
They said that
- 3 He said, 'I finished the report.'
He said that
- 4 Joe said, 'I have just left the office.'
Joe said that
- 5 He said, 'I'll send it.'
He said that
- 6 Anna said, 'I can't come.'
Anna said that
- 7 Paolo said, 'I might be late.'
Paolo said that
- 8 We said, 'Star Wars is a good film.'
We said that
- 9 Charlene asked, 'Where do you work?'
Charlene asked me
- 10 Tom asked, 'Do you work here?'
Tom asked me

4 Write the last sentence (or question) you said to someone using direct speech. Then rewrite it as reported speech.

Direct speech: I said, '.....'

Reported speech: I said that