

## Fact sheet

# Direct Speech and Reported Speech

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Let's say you and your friend, Rebecca, are eating dinner at a restaurant on Saturday night. Rebecca tells you all about her boyfriend Joshua. She tells you what Joshua told her on Friday. She can say it in two ways.

The first way is called "direct speech." Direct speech is **EXACTLY** what the person said. Here is an example:

**Joshua said, "I need to take a taxi."**

According to the above sentence, Joshua said **EXACTLY** those words.

The other way of repeating what a person says is called "reported speech." Reported speech is **NOT EXACTLY** what the person said. It is like a summary or paraphrase of what the speaker said. Take a look at the following example:

**Joshua said that he needed to take a taxi.**

This is **NOT EXACTLY** what Joshua said.

Here is another example:

Direct Speech (EXACT)	Reported Speech (NOT EXACT)
Joshua said, "I love eating chocolate ice cream after dinner."	<b>Joshua said that he loved eating chocolate ice cream after dinner.</b>

How are direct speech and reported speech different? There are 5 things that are different:

1. Direct speech has **quotation marks**; reported speech does **not** use quotation marks.
2. In reported speech, the **pronoun** often changes. For example, in the above sentence with quoted speech the pronoun **I** is used, whereas the sentence with reported speech uses the pronoun **he**.
3. In reported speech, the word **that** is often used after **said**, but **that** is optional.

4. Direct speech is exactly what the person said.
5. The verb in reported speech is changed to the past; some modal verbs do not change. There are rules to follow when changing the verb. Please see the chart below.

Direct Speech (EXACT)	Reported Speech (NOT EXACT)	Note:
Jordan said, "I <b>cook</b> rice every day."	Jordan said that she <b>cooked</b> rice every day.	
Jordan said, "I <b>am cooking</b> rice."	Jordan said that she <b>was cooking</b> rice.	
Jordan said, "I <b>cooked</b> rice."	Jordan said that she <b>had cooked</b> rice.	The past tense all use had + past participle.
Jordan said, "I <b>have cooked</b> rice."	Jordan said that she <b>had cooked</b> rice.	
Jordan said, "I <b>had cooked</b> rice."	Jordan said that she <b>had cooked</b> rice.	
Jordan said, "I <b>will cook</b> rice."	Jordan said that she <b>would cook</b> rice.	
Jordan said, "I <b>am going to cook</b> rice."	Jordan said that she <b>was going to cook</b> rice.	
Jordan said, "I <b>can cook</b> rice."	Jordan said that she <b>could cook</b> rice.	
Jordan said, "I <b>may cook</b> rice."	Jordan said that she <b>might cook</b> rice.	
Jordan said, "I <b>must cook</b> rice."	Jordan said that she <b>had to cook</b> rice.	
Jordan said, "I <b>have to cook</b> rice."	Jordan said that she <b>had to cook</b> rice.	
Jordan said, "I <b>should cook</b> rice."	Jordan said that she <b>should cook</b> rice.	These modals do not change when used in reported speech.
Jordan said, "I <b>ought to cook</b> rice."	Jordan said that she <b>ought to cook</b> rice.	
Jordan said, "I <b>might cook</b> rice."	Jordan said that she <b>might cook</b> rice.	
Jordan <u>says</u> , "I <b>cook</b> rice every day."	Jordan <u>says</u> that she <b>cooks</b> rice every day."	When you use the words <b>say</b> , <b>has said</b> , or <b>will say</b> (not <b>said</b> ), the verb tense remains the same for both the quoted speech and reported speech
Jordan <u>has said</u> , "I <b>cook</b> rice every day."	Jordan <u>has said</u> that she <b>cooks</b> rice every day."	
Jordan <u>will say</u> , "I <b>cook</b> rice every day."	Jordan <u>will say</u> that she <b>cooks</b> rice every day."	
Jordan said, "Cook rice."	Jordan told me to cook rice.	For commands, use the word <b>told</b> instead of said, and use an <u>infinitive</u> for the main verb.

For help and information on speech marks, click on the following link:

[www.bbc.co.uk/learningzone/clips/speech-marks/9122.html](http://www.bbc.co.uk/learningzone/clips/speech-marks/9122.html)