



NDA/NA ENGLISH MASTERY SERIES

MODULE 13

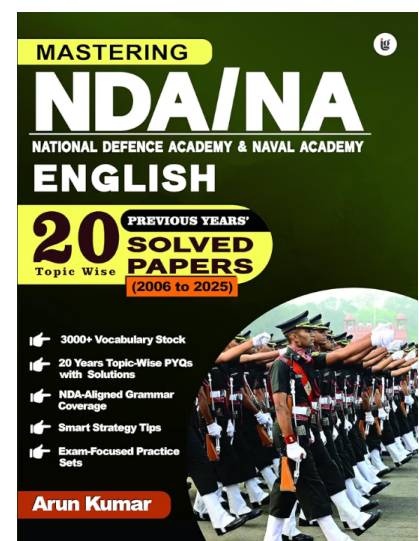
Narration

Direct and indirect speech rules, transformations and practice.

From the book

MASTERING NDA/NA ENGLISH

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➤ Introduction

In English grammar, **Direct Speech** refers to reporting the exact words spoken by someone, while **Indirect Speech** (or Reported Speech) conveys the meaning of what someone said without quoting them exactly.

➤ Key Terms

- Reporting Verb: The verb used to report the speech (e.g., said, told, asked).
- Reported Speech: The words that are being reported.

➤ Rules for Changing Direct Speech into Indirect Speech

Rule 1: Change of Pronouns

Pronouns are changed according to the context of the sentence.

- First Person → Changes according to the SUBJECT of the reporting verb.
- Second Person → Changes according to the OBJECT of the reporting verb.
- Third Person → Usually remains unchanged.

Examples:

- Direct: He said, "I am tired."
Indirect: He said that he was tired.
- Direct: She said to me, "You have done well."
Indirect: She told me that I had done well.

Rule 2: Change of Tenses in Reported Speech

In reported speech, the tense of the verb in the reported clause usually changes depending on the tense of the reporting verb (e.g., *said*, *told*, *asked*).

A. When the Reporting Verb is in the Present or Future Tense

If the reporting verb is in the present or future tense, no change is made in the tense of the reported speech.

Examples:

- **Present Reporting Verb:**
Direct: He says, "I go to school."
Indirect: He says that he goes to school.
- **Future Reporting Verb:**
Direct: She will say, "I have passed the test."
Indirect: She will say that she has passed the test.

In both cases, the tense of the original speech remains unchanged. But, the persons will change as per the rules.

B. When the Reporting Verb is in the Past Tense

If the reporting verb is in the past tense, the tense of the reported speech generally shifts one step back into the past. This is known as back shifting.

Tense Shift Table

DIRECT SPEECH TENSE	CHANGES TO	EXAMPLE
Present Simple	Past Simple	He said, "I play football." → He said that he played football.
Present Continuous	Past Continuous	She said, "I am reading." → She said that she was reading .
Present Perfect	Past Perfect	He said, "I have finished." → He said that he had finished .
Past Simple	Past Perfect	They said, "We watched it." → They said that they had watched it.
Past Continuous	Past Perfect Continuous	She said, "I was working." → She said that she had been working .
Past Perfect	(No change)	She said, "I had slept early." → She said that she had slept early.
Will/Shall	Would/Should	He said, "I will help." → He said that he would help .

C. No Tense Change for Universal Truths, Scientific Facts, or Habitual Actions

When the reported speech expresses a universal truth, scientific fact, or habitual action, the tense remains unchanged — even if the reporting verb is in the past tense.

Examples:

- Direct: He said, "The sun rises in the east."
Indirect: He said that the sun rises in the east.
- Direct: She said, "Water boils at 100°C."
Indirect: She said that water boils at 100°C.
- Direct: They said, "We go jogging every morning."
Indirect: They said that they go jogging every morning.

Rule 3: Change of Time and Place Words

Direct Speech To Indirect Speech
now → then
today → that day
tomorrow → the next day / the following day
yesterday → the previous day / the day before
here → there
this → that
these → those

Example:

- Direct: He said, "I will meet you here tomorrow."
- Indirect: He said that he would meet me there the next day.

Types of Sentences and Their Conversions**A. Declarative Sentences (Statements)****Structure:**

- Reporting Verb: said / told
- Conjunction: **that**
- Tense, pronoun, and time adjustments as per rules

Example:

- Direct: She said, "I am happy."
- Indirect: She said that she was happy.

B. Interrogative Sentences (Questions)**Rules:**

- Reporting Verb: asked, inquired, wanted to know
- Remove question format; use if/whether (Yes-No questions) or WH-word (for WH questions)
- No use of do/does/did in indirect speech

Examples:

1. **Yes/No type:**
 - Direct: He said, "Do you like coffee?"
 - Indirect: He asked if I liked coffee.
2. **WH-type:**
 - Direct: She said, "Where do you live?"
 - Indirect: She asked where I lived.

C. Imperative Sentences (Commands, Requests, Advice)**Rules:**

- Reporting Verb: told, ordered, requested, advised, urged, etc.
- Use **to + base verb** or **not to + base verb** for negative sentences
- Remove imperative structure

Examples:

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- Direct: He said, "Open the window."
Indirect: He told me to open the window.
- Direct: She said, "Don't talk loudly."
Indirect: She told me not to talk loudly.
- Direct: The teacher said, "Study hard."
Indirect: The teacher advised us to study hard.

D. Exclamatory Sentences

Rules:

- Reporting Verb: exclaimed, said with joy/sorrow/surprise, etc.
- Remove interjections (e.g., oh, alas, hurrah) and use appropriate expressions

Examples:

- Direct: He said, "Hurrah! We won the match."
Indirect: He exclaimed with joy that they had won the match.
- Direct: She said, "Alas! I failed the test."
Indirect: She exclaimed with sorrow that she had failed the test.

E. Optative Sentences (Wishes, Prayers, Blessings)

Rules:

- Reporting Verb: wished, prayed, blessed, etc.

Examples:

- Direct: He said, "May God bless you!"
Indirect: He prayed that God might bless me.
- Direct: She said, "May you succeed!"
Indirect: She wished that I might succeed.

Special Cases

A. Reporting Verb in Present/Future Tense

No change in tense of reported speech.

- Direct: She says, "I am reading."
Indirect: She says that she is reading.

B. Modals

- Can → could
- May → might
- Shall/Will → should/would
- Must → had to (usually)

Example:

- Direct: He said, "I can swim."
Indirect: He said that he could swim.

Summary Chart

SENTENCE TYPE	CONJUNCTION USED	REPORTING VERB	KEY CHANGE
Statement	that	said/told	Tense, pronoun, time
Yes/No Question	if/whether	asked/inquired	Tense + remove question
WH-Question	WH-word	asked	Tense + remove question
Command	to / not to	told/ordered	Use of infinitive
Exclamation	that	exclaimed	Remove interjections
Wish/Prayer	that	wished/prayed	Use of modal (might)

Direct & Indirect Speech

Sentence Type	Example (Direct)	Example (Indirect)
Assertive (Positive)	She said, "I visit my grandparents every Sunday."	She said that she visited her grandparents every Sunday.
Assertive (Negative)	He said, "I don't like spicy food."	He said that he didn't like spicy food.
Yes/No Question	She asked, "Do you read books daily?"	She asked whether I read books daily.
Yes/No Question (Negative)	He asked, "Don't you know the rules?"	He asked whether I didn't know the rules.
WH Question – What	She asked, "What is your favorite hobby?"	She asked what my favorite hobby was.
WH Question – Why	He asked, "Why are you upset today?"	He asked why I was upset that day.
WH Question – Where	They asked, "Where do you work now?"	They asked where I worked then.
WH Question – How	She asked, "How did you complete the task?"	She asked how I had completed the task.

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Sentence Type	Example (Direct)	Example (Indirect)
WH Question – When	He asked, “When will you arrive tomorrow?”	He asked when I would arrive the next day.
Imperative – Request	She said, “Please open the door.”	She requested me to open the door.
Imperative – Command	He said, “Finish your work now.”	He ordered me to finish my work then.
Imperative – Advice	The doctor said, “Exercise regularly.”	The doctor advised me to exercise regularly.
Imperative – Warning	He said, “Do not cross the road now.”	He warned me not to cross the road then.
Imperative – Suggestion	She said, “Let us plan a trip.”	She suggested that we should plan a trip.
Exclamatory – Joy	They said, “Hurrah! We have passed the exam!”	They exclaimed with joy that they had passed the exam.
Exclamatory – Sorrow	He said, “Alas! I failed the test.”	He exclaimed with sorrow that he had failed the test.

“If” and “Whether” act as connecting links between the reporting verb and the reported question. Choosing between “If” and “Whether” depends on the type of question—whether it is a Yes/No question or one that offers choices.

Use	Explanation	Example (Direct Speech)	Example (Indirect Speech)
IF	For Yes/No type questions (answer is yes or no)	He said, “Are you coming?”	He asked if I was coming.
WHETHER	When there are choices/options (e.g. this or that)	He said, “Do you like tea or coffee?”	He asked whether I liked tea or coffee.
WHETHER	When after a preposition	He was worried about whether he would pass.	(Never use “if” after prepositions)
WHETHER	When followed by “or not”	I don’t know whether or not he’ll come.	(Not: <i>if or not</i>)

Practice Set: Narration

Directions: Each sentence contains a statement in direct speech that needs to be converted into indirect (reported) speech. The sentences include statements, questions, commands, requests, suggestions, and exclamations. Your task is to change the sentence into the appropriate reported form, ensuring correct changes in tense, pronouns, word order, and reporting verbs.

Practice Set 1

1. She said, "I am attending the seminar tomorrow."
2. "Will you join the expedition?" the leader asked the team.
3. She asked, "Wouldn't you help me with the project?"
4. The teacher asked, "What is the capital of France?"
5. He asked me, "Why did you miss the meeting yesterday?"
6. She asked her friend, "Where are you traveling next month?"
7. The coach asked, "How did you improve your performance?"
8. They asked me, "When will the results be announced?"
9. He said to her, "Please open the window."
10. The teacher said to the student, "why haven't you submitted your assignment yet?"
11. He said, "If I had known about the meeting, I would have attended it."
12. The guide said, "Don't touch the artifacts!"
13. He said, "Let's plan a trip this weekend."
14. She exclaimed, "What a fantastic performance!"
15. Ramesh said, "How beautiful the night sky looks today!"
16. She shouted, "How dare you ignore my instructions!"
17. The manager asked, "Can you complete this by tomorrow?"
18. He said, "The plan is risky, isn't it?"
19. The child said, "I can't find my book anywhere."
20. "Why don't you try a new approach?" she asked him.
21. He said, "I have finished my assignment today."
22. "Are you coming to the meeting?" he asked her.
23. She said, "May God bless you with success."
24. She asked him, "Why are you always late for class?"

25. The captain shouted, "Don't move from your positions!"

Practice Set 2

1. He said, "Let's organize a charity event."
2. He exclaimed, "What a beautiful sunrise!"
3. "How unexpected your visit is!" he exclaimed.
4. The boss shouted, "Why are you so careless!"
5. The teacher said, "May you all pass with good marks."
6. They said, "The weather is pleasant, isn't it?"
7. "Why haven't you called me?" he asked her.
8. The doctor said, "I am examining the patient now."
9. "Will you support the new policy?" she asked him.
10. The judge asked, "What evidence do you have?"
11. She asked me, "Why did you cancel the trip?"
12. He asked the clerk, "Where are the documents kept?"
13. The trainer asked, "How did you manage the stress?"
14. They asked, "When will the concert start?"
15. He said to her, "Please pass me the salt."
16. She said to her brother, "Don't make noise while I'm studying."
17. She said to him, "You should revise your notes."
18. The lifeguard shouted, "Don't swim in deep water!"
19. They said, "Let's try a new restaurant tonight."
20. She exclaimed, "What a thrilling match!"
21. The guide said, "The Ganga flows into the Bay of Bengal."
22. She shouted, "How could you betray my trust!"
23. The officer asked, "Can you provide more details?"
24. He said, "The task is challenging, isn't it?"
25. The librarian said, "Don't write in the books."

Answers

Practice Set 1

1. She said that she was attending the seminar the next day.
2. The leader asked the team if they would join the expedition.
3. She asked if I wouldn't help her with the project.
4. The teacher asked what the capital of France was.
5. He asked me why I had missed the meeting the day before.
6. She asked her friend where she was traveling the next month.
7. The coach asked how I had improved my performance.
8. They asked me when the results would be announced.
9. He requested her to open the window.
10. The teacher asked the student why he hadn't submitted his assignment yet.
11. He said that if he had known about the meeting, he would have attended it.
12. The guide warned not to touch the artifacts.
13. He suggested that they should plan a trip that weekend.
14. She exclaimed that it was a fantastic performance.
15. Ramesh exclaimed that the night sky looked very beautiful that day.
16. She shouted angrily how I dared to ignore her instructions.
17. The manager asked if I could complete that by the next day.
18. He said that the plan was risky and asked for confirmation.
19. The child said that he couldn't find his book anywhere.
20. She asked him why he didn't try a new approach.
21. He said that he had finished his assignment that day.
22. He asked her if she was coming to the meeting.
23. She prayed that God might bless me with success.
24. She asked him why he was always late for class.

25. The captain ordered them not to move from their positions.

Practice Set 2

1. He suggested that they should organize a charity event.
2. He exclaimed that it was a beautiful sunrise.
3. He exclaimed how unexpected my visit was.
4. The boss shouted angrily asking why I was so careless.
5. The teacher wished that we all might pass with good marks.
6. They said that the weather was pleasant and sought confirmation.
7. He asked her why she hadn't called him.
8. The doctor said that he was examining the patient then.
9. She asked him if he would support the new policy.
10. The judge asked what evidence I had.
11. She asked me why I had canceled the trip.
12. He asked the clerk where the documents were kept.
13. The trainer asked how I had managed the stress.
14. They asked when the concert would start.
15. He requested her to pass him the salt.
16. She told her brother not to make noise while she was studying.
17. She told him that he should revise his notes.
18. The lifeguard warned them not to swim in deep water.
19. They suggested that they should try a new restaurant that night.
20. She exclaimed that it was a thrilling match.
21. The guide said that the Ganga flows into the Bay of Bengal.
22. She shouted how I could betray her trust.
23. The officer asked if I could provide more details.
24. He said that the task was challenging and asked for confirmation.
25. The librarian instructed not to write in the books.