

Reporting questions, commands, orders etc.

When the reporting verb is in the present or future tense, the verb in the reported speech does not change.

He says, 'I enjoy this.'

He says that he enjoys this.

She says, 'I don't want to go.'

She says that she doesn't want to go.

Rita says, 'I am working.'

Rita says that she is working.

She will say, 'I have finished.'

She will say that she has finished.

That as a connector

We use the conjunction that to report a statement.

She said, 'I am ready.'

She said that she was ready.

He said, 'I won't permit this.'

He said that he wouldn't permit that.

Mitra said, 'I don't want to go.'

Mitra said that she didn't want to go.

Reporting questions

To report a question we use a reporting verb like asked or enquired.

Reporting questions, commands, orders etc.

He said, 'Who are you?'

He asked me who I was.

The teacher said, 'What are you doing there?'

The teacher asked me what I was doing there.

Note that in reported questions, the subject comes before the verb whereas in direct questions the auxiliary verb goes before the subject.

He said, 'Are you happy?'

He enquired if I was happy.

We use if or whether to report an indirect question.

The girl said the stranger, 'Will you help me?'

The girl asked the stranger if/whether he would help her.

Reporting an order, request or command

To report a command, order or request we use a reporting verb like told, ordered, requested or commanded.

Mother said to the daughter, 'Go and wash your hands.'

Mother told her daughter to go and wash her hands.

The judge said to the witness, 'Tell the truth.'

The judge ordered the witness to tell the truth.