

# Basic English Grammar



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# **Reported Speech**

Week 12 – Lecture 12

# **Reported Speech**

The words that people say are called direct speech. Reported speech is often used to describe what someone said at an earlier point in time.

Types:

**Statement**

**Wh- questions**

**Yes/no questions**

**Imperative**

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**Statement**

**Wh- questions**

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Types:

**Statement**

**Wh- questions**

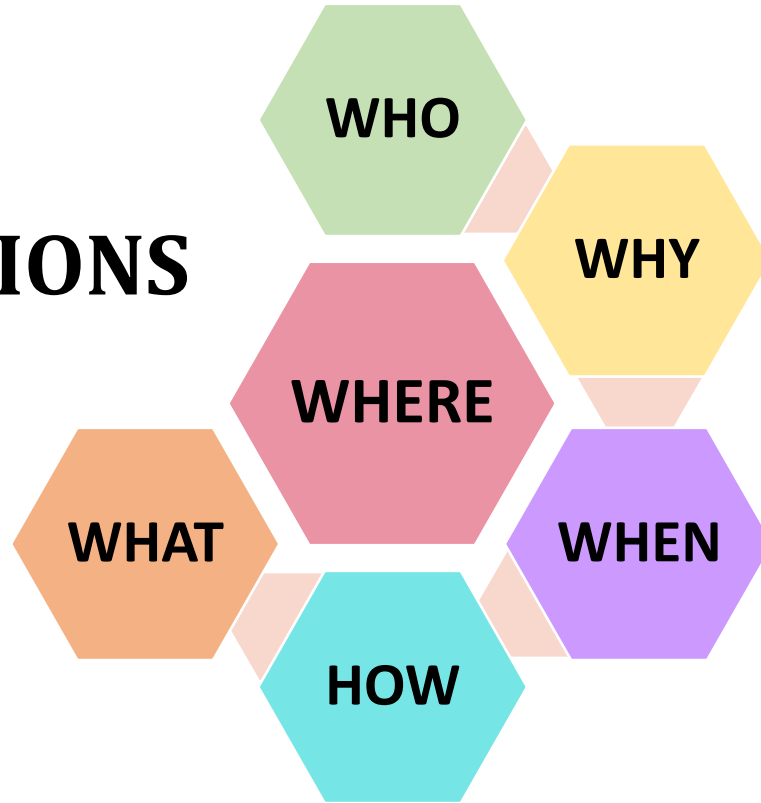
**Yes/no questions**

**Imperative**

# Reported Questions

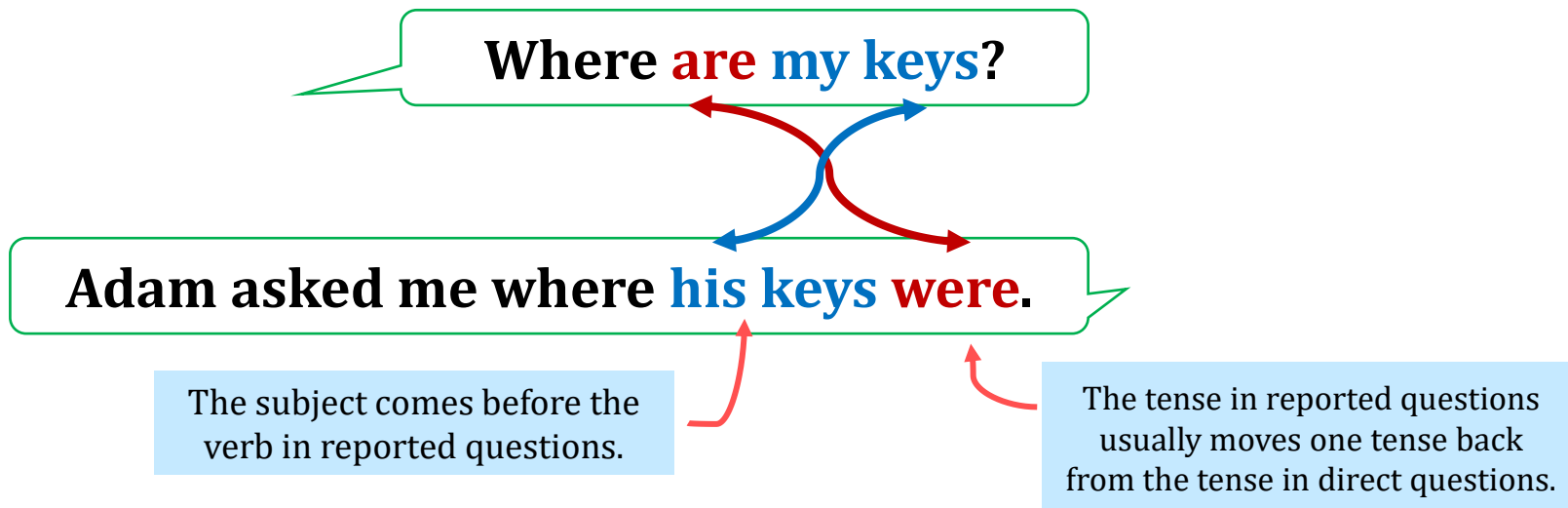
Reported questions are used to describe questions that someone has asked. Direct questions and reported questions use different word orders.

# WH- QUESTIONS



# REPORTED OPEN QUESTIONS

Direct open questions are reported by swapping the order of the subject.



## Further examples:

Why **can't** you come to the party?

He asked me why I **couldn't** come to the party?

When **will** they arrive?

She asked when **would** they arrive.

# WH- QUESTIONS WITH “DO”

When a direct question uses the verb “do”, this is left out of reported questions.

Let's bake a cake. What **do** we **need**?



She asked me what we **needed**.

Reported questions leave out the auxiliary verb “do”.

The past form of the verb is usually used.

# Further examples:

Why **do** you **want** to work for us?



They asked me why I **wanted** to work for them.

What **does** a florist **do**?



James asked me what a florist **does**.

Where **do** Jay and Gina **live**?



Paul asked me where Jay and Gina **live**.

Who **do** you **know** at work?



She asked who I **knew** at work.

What **do** you usually **knit**?



He asked me what I usually **knit**.

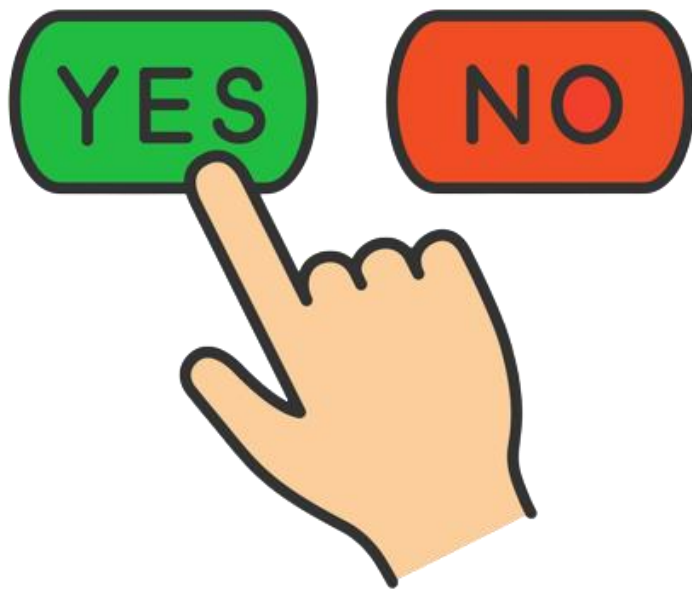
# Common mistakes word order in reported speech.

He asked me where **the station is**.



He asked me where **is the station**.





**QUESTIONS**

# REPORTED CLOSED QUESTIONS

If the answer to a question in direct speech is “yes” or “no”, the word “if” or “whether” is used to report the question. “whether” is more formal than “if”.

**Are you** meeting your sales targets?

My boss asked me **if I was** meeting my sales target.

Reported question uses  
“if” or “whether”

# Further examples:

Will **you** be at the meeting on Monday?

Kara asked **whether I would** be at the meeting on Monday.

In reported questions with “if” and “whether”,  
the object after “asked” can be left out.

Do **you want** to stay for dinner?

He asked me **if we wanted** to stay for dinner.

In reported questions with “if” and “whether”,  
leave out the auxiliary verb “do”.

# REPORTING QUESTIONS WITH “OR”

“If” or “whether” can also be used to report questions that use “or” in direct speech.

Does **Jo** **want** tea **or** coffee?

Jo, Tom asked me **if you wanted** tea **or** coffee?

The verb changes tense.

## Further examples:

Do **you want** to go by car **or** by train?

He asked **whether we wanted** to go by car **or** by train.

Do **you prefer** wine **or** champagne?

Jo asked me **if I preferred** wine **or** champagne.

# Imperative

Some reporting verbs are followed by an object and infinitive. English often uses these verbs to report orders, advice, and instructions.

# IMPERATIVE (+)

DIRECT:

: My mother: “**Close your eyes!**”

REPORTED:

: My mother ordered **to close my eyes.**

# IMPERATIVE (-)

DIRECT:

: My brother: “**Don’t close the door!**”

REPORTED:

: My brother asked **not to close the door.**

# Further examples:

Come to the party! You'll have a great time.

We **encouraged** Gary **to come** to the party.

Remember to buy some milk tonight.

Ellie **reminded** me **to buy** some milk tonight.

<b>TYPES</b>	<b>CONJUNCTION</b>
Statement	that
Wh- questions	wh- words
Yes/no questions	If/whether
Imperative	to

# Exercise!

Bethy: "Are the boys reading the book?"

Bethy asked me \_\_\_\_\_

Febiola: "Who gave you the laptop?"

Febiola wanted to know \_\_\_\_\_

Yegar: "Is Samuel leaving on Friday?"

Yegar asked me \_\_\_\_\_

Yoshe: "Where do you play football today?"

Yoshe wanted to know \_\_\_\_\_

# Answer:

Bethy: “Are the boys reading the book?”

Bethy asked me **if** the boys **were reading** the book.

Febiola: “Who gave you the laptop?”

Febiola wanted to know **who had given** the laptop.

Yegar: “Is Samuel leaving on Friday?”

Yegar asked **whether** Samuel **was leaving** on Friday.

Yoshe: “Where do you play football today?”

Yoshe wanted to know **where** we **played** football that day.

Thank you!

## REFERENCES

Murphy, Raymond & Smalzer, William. *Grammar in use, Intermediate*. Cambridge U. Press, 2019.

DK. *English for Everyone – English Grammar Guide*. Dorling Kindersley Limited, 2016.

Picture on slide 16: <https://www.vectorstock.com/royalty-free-vector/yes-or-no-click-color-icon-vector-28806836>