



Mini Lesson 008 - Reported Speech: Handling Different Tenses

When transforming direct speech into reported speech, it's not just about changing the present simple to the past simple. We typically adjust other tenses too, a process known as "backshifting." Let's explore how this works with a few examples.

Present Continuous

When someone is describing an ongoing action in direct speech, it often gets reported in the past continuous:

- **Direct speech:** "I am reading a book."
- **Reported speech:** She mentioned that she **was reading** a book.

Present Perfect Simple

Statements about past actions with relevance to the present are shifted from the present perfect to the past perfect:

- **Direct speech:** "I have completed the assignment."
- **Reported speech:** He explained that he **had completed** the assignment.

Past Simple (An Exception)

Interestingly, the past simple can either stay the same or shift to the past perfect:

- **Direct speech:** "I watched that movie."
- **Reported speech:** She stated that she **had watched** that movie **or** she **watched** that movie.

Understanding these shifts is crucial for mastering reported speech in English.



Let's Practice!

Convert the following sentences into reported speech. Begin each sentence with **"Julie said that..."**

1. The team is preparing for the match.

- Julie said that _____.

2. I have bought groceries.

- Julie said that _____.

3. We are planning a surprise.

- Julie said that _____.

4. I took a photography class.

- Julie said that _____.

5. The guests have arrived.

- Julie said that _____.

6. I am attending the conference.

- Julie said that _____.

7. She has cleaned the house.

- Julie said that _____.

8. I am baking a cake.

- Julie said that _____.

9. They have organized the event.

- Julie said that _____.

10. Michael texted earlier.

- Julie said that _____.



Answers:

1. Julie said that the team **was preparing** for the match.
2. Julie said that she **had bought** groceries.
3. Julie said that they **were planning** a surprise.
4. Julie said that she **had taken** a photography class (**or she took a photography class**).
5. Julie said that the guests **had arrived**.
6. Julie said that she **was attending** the conference.
7. Julie said that she **had cleaned** the house.
8. Julie said that she **was baking** a cake.
9. Julie said that they **had organized** the event.
10. Julie said that Michael **had texted** earlier (**or Michael texted earlier**).