

**From Africa to
Asia:Paco
asked the train
ticket inspector
how long the
journey to
Mumbai took**



Paco asked the train ticket inspector how long the journey to Mumbai took

Reporting verbs: I

When using reported speech, most students learn to use *say* and *tell*:

Paco told me he was going to stay abroad for a long time.

Sonia said that Paco wanted to visit his parents at Christmas.

These forms are perfectly correct for reporting what others have said. However, there are a number of other reporting verbs which describe more accurately what someone has said. These verbs take a variety of structures. In the following slide you can find some reporting verbs divided in different categories based on sentence structure. Notice that a number of verbs can take more than one form.

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Reporting verbs: II

- **Verb + object + infinitive:** advise, encourage, invite, remind, warn
My father advised me to give up smoking.
- **Verb + infinitive:** agree, decide, offer, promise, refuse, threaten
The teacher refused to do another exam for him.
- **Verb + (that):** admit, agree, decide, deny, explain, insist, promise, recommend, suggest
My mum insisted (that) we had dinner with her.
- **Verb + gerund:** deny, recommend, suggest
The thief denied having stolen the bank.
- **Verb + object + preposition + gerund:** accuse, blame, congratulate
The police accused me of ignoring the stop traffic sign.
- **Verb + preposition + gerund:** apologize, insist
My husband insisting on driving further.

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Questions in reported speech

1. Yes / no questions:

This type of question is reported by using **'ask' + 'if / whether + clause'**:

*'Do you speak German?' He asked me **if I spoke German.***

*'Are you British or American?' He asked me **whether I was British or American.***

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Questions in reported speech

2. Question words (*Wh-* questions):

This type of question is reported by using **'ask' (or another verb like 'ask') + question word + clause**. The clause contains the question, in normal word order and with the necessary tense change.

*'What is your sister's name?' He asked me **what my sister's name was**.*

*"How old are you?", he asked. He asked **how old I was**.*

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Questions in reported speech

3. Word order:

As you have realized above, normal word order is used in reported questions: the subject comes before the verb, and it is not necessary to use 'do' or 'did':

*"Where does Paco live?" She asked him **where Paco lived.***

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