

In general, tenses move one step to the past in reported speech.

N.B. Reported speech is especially useful for Part 2 and Part 4 of the TOP.

**Statements: present** ..... **present** becomes **past**

"I **am** . . ." — She *said* she **was** . . .

"We **can't** . . ." — They began by saying they **couldn't** . . .

"You **don't have to** do that . . ." — She told me that I **didn't have to** do that . . .

**Statements: past** ..... **past** becomes **past perfect**

"We **had** fun." — They said they **had had** fun.

"We **weren't able to** . . ." — They said they **hadn't been able to** . . .

**Questions: future will** ..... **will** becomes **past modal would**

"When **will** you leave?" — She asked when I **would** leave.

**Questions: future be going to** ..... **be going to** becomes **past continuous + to**

"Are you **going to** go?" — He asked *if* I **was going to** go. (N.B. *if* or *whether* is added)

**Questions: continuous** ..... **present continuous** becomes **past continuous**

"Are you **going**?" — He asked *if* I **was going**.

"Are you **going** or not?" — He asked *whether* I **was going** or not.

**Imperative: base form** ..... **base form** becomes **the infinitive**

"**Finish** the report for Friday." — She told me **to finish** the report for Friday.

### Some Exceptions

**Polite questions** ..... **form change** but no tense change

"When **would you like** me to . . ." — She asked me **when I would like** her to . . .

**Former habits** ..... **no tense change**

"**We used to** work weekends." — He said that they **used to** work weekends.

**Subjunctive** ..... **no tense change**

"Roch suggests that Marta **go** now." — Roch suggested that Marta **go** now.

**Preference: should + passive voice** ..... **no change**

"A new approach **should be tried**." — She said a new approach **should be tried**.