

Reported questions and commands

English Grammar · B2

Indirect Questions

Reported questions & commands

Questions	Commands
statement order	(not) to + verb
<i>She asked where I lived</i>	<i>He told me to wait</i>

Reported questions & commands: reference card grid

When reporting a **question**, the word order changes back to **statement word order** (subject + verb), and the question mark is removed.

- **Yes/No questions** → introduced by **if / whether**.
- **Wh- questions** → introduced by the original **question word** (what, where...).

She asked where I lived.

She asked me where I lived. (Original: "Where do you live?")

He asked if I was busy.

He asked me if I was busy. (Original: "Are you busy?")

Note: In indirect questions, auxiliary verbs **do / does / did** are not used, and there is no inversion: ~where did I live~ × → where I lived ✓.

Indirect Commands and Requests

When reporting a **command, request, or suggestion**, use **tell / ask / advise + someone + (not) to + base verb**.

She told me to wait.

She told me to wait a moment. (Original: "Wait.")

He asked me not to be late.

He asked me not to be late. (Original: "Please don't be late.")

Note: Negative commands use **not to**: asked me **not to** go (asked me not to go).

Common Errors

- × ~~He asked me am I busy.~~ → ✓ He asked me **if I was** busy. — You cannot simply insert the original sentence; it must become *if* + statement word order.
- × ~~She said me to wait.~~ → ✓ She **told me** to wait. — For reporting commands, use *tell / ask / advise + person + to do*; *say* cannot take this construction.
- × ~~He told me don't be late.~~ → ✓ He told me **not to be** late. — Negative commands become *not to*; *don't* cannot be inserted directly into reported speech.
- × ~~She suggested me to go home.~~ → ✓ She suggested **that I (should) go** home. / She suggested **going** home. — *suggest* cannot be followed by "person + to do".