



Reporting Verbs: Beyond "He Said"

THE FOREGROUND

What is this topic about?

Reporting verbs are verbs used to report what someone else has said, but with added meaning—like "suggest," "claim," "deny," or "warn."

Why do people get confused?

Most students rely 100% on "say" and "tell." While correct, these verbs are "neutral"—they don't tell the listener *how* or *why* something was said.

Who is this for?

Intermediate to Advanced (B2-C1) learners who want to add nuance and professionalism to their stories and emails.

Our Approach

We categorize reporting verbs by their "vibe" and their grammar patterns so you can use them accurately and confidently.

The Introduction: Why This Matters

Imagine a coworker says: "*I think we should change the deadline.*" If you tell your boss, "*He **said** we should change it,*" you are being neutral. But if you say, "*He **suggested** changing it,*" you are highlighting his contribution. If you say, "*He **insisted** on changing it,*" you are signaling that he was very firm.

The verb you choose changes the entire meaning of the sentence. Reporting verbs allow you to describe the *intent* behind the words, making your English more precise, professional, and expressive.

"She admitted that the mistake was hers."

Insight: Using 'admitted' instead of 'said' adds honesty and responsibility to the statement.

1. Categorizing the "Vibe"

The Suggestors (Soft & Collaborative)

These verbs are used when someone offers an idea or a gentle opinion.

- **Suggest:** *"She suggested meeting at 5 PM."*
- **Propose:** *"The manager proposed a new strategy."*
- **Recommend:** *"I recommend trying the local pasta."*

The Claimers (Strong & Opinionated)

Use these when someone is making a statement that might not be 100% proven.

- **Claim:** *"He claims to have seen a ghost."*
- **Insist:** *"She insisted that she was right."* (Also: *"She insisted **on leaving** early."*)

The Confessors (Honesty & Denial)

Use these for admitting or denying facts.

- **Admit:** *"He admitted making a mistake."*
- **Deny:** *"The suspect denied stealing the car."*

The Instructors (Warnings, Promises & Advice)

Verbs that trigger a specific action, commitment, or caution.

- **Warn:** *"They warned us not to touch the fence."*
- **Remind:** *"She reminded me to call my mom."*
- **Promise:** *"He promised to help me with the move."*

- **Refuse:** "We refused to pay the extra fee."

2. The Grammar Trap

Reporting verbs follow different patterns. Mixing them up is a common "advanced" mistake.

Pattern	Examples
Verb + that + sentence	claim, insist, admit, explain
Verb + -ing	suggest, recommend, deny
Verb + to-infinitive	offer, promise, refuse
Verb + obj + to-inf	tell, advise, warn, remind

NATIVE CORRECTION / MISTAKE ALERT

✗ "He suggested me to go to the doctor."

✓ "He suggested that I go to the doctor." or "He suggested going..."

Mastery Workshop

PART 1: The Vibe Check

1. "I'm 100% sure I didn't do it!" -> He _____ *doing it*. (Denied / Admitted)
2. "Maybe we should wait?" -> She _____ *waiting*. (Insisted / Suggested)

PART 2: Application

Rewrite this: "He said he would help me." (Use **promised**)

-> _____

The Final 10 Challenge

1. She _____ (suggest) going to the cinema.
2. He _____ (deny) stealing the wallet.
3. They _____ (warn) us not to touch the fence.
4. She _____ (recommend) that you see a doctor.
5. He _____ (claim) to be a millionaire.
6. She _____ (remind) me to call my mom.
7. We _____ (refuse) to pay the extra fee.
8. He _____ (admit) that he was wrong.
9. They _____ (propose) a new plan.
10. I _____ (insist) on paying for dinner.

The Logic & Explanation Key

Mastery Workshop Key

Part 1: The Vibe Check

1. **denied:** Use "deny" when saying something is NOT true.
2. **suggested:** Use "suggest" for "maybe" ideas.

Part 2: Application

- **He promised to help me:** "Promise" is followed by the to-infinitive.

The Final 10 Challenge Key

1. **suggested:** Suggest + -ing.
2. **denied:** Deny + -ing.
3. **warned:** Warn + object + to-infinitive.
4. **recommended:** Recommend + that + sentence (Past simple for consistency).
5. **claimed:** Claim + to-infinitive.

6. reminded: Remind + object + to-infinitive.

7. refused: Refuse + to-infinitive.

8. admitted: Admit + that + sentence.

9. proposed: Propose + noun phrase.

10. insisted: Insist + on + -ing.