

Reporting verb patterns

When we report what someone has said, we can use say, tell, ask or other verbs. Each reporting verb follows a specific pattern:

Pattern	Verbs	Example sentences
verb + (that) + reported sentence	admit, advise, agree, claim, complain, demand, deny, explain, insist, promise, recommend, regret, threaten	Users complained that Facebook was not responding to their reports of racist abuse and threats. He promised he would send me an email with details of the homework.
verb + object + (that) + reported sentence	advise, assure, convince, inform, persuade, promise, remind, tell, warn	They've convinced us that social media marketing is very effective. The article reminded me that nursing requires an individualistic approach.
verb + if/wh-word + reported sentence	ask, explain, report, wonder	I wonder if LinkedIn will actually help me find my dream job. He tried to explain why tabloids sell much more than broadsheets.
verb + (that) + personal pronoun + (should) + infinitive without to	beg, demand, insist, propose, recommend, suggest	The student body proposed that they (should) be allowed to use tablets in class. He insisted that we (should) leave our phones behind for the evening.
verb + infinitive	agree, ask, claim, decide, demand, offer, promise, refuse, threaten	The editors of Wikipedia® refused to remove the article. His new film claims to be based on a true story.
verb + object + infinitive	advise, allow, ask, beg, convince, encourage, forbid, invite, order, persuade, remind, urge, warn	It's vital to encourage children to be very careful when disclosing personal information online. My parents urged me to take part in some form of physical activity.
verb + -ing form	admit, advise, deny, propose, recommend, regret, report, suggest	Have you ever regretted sending a text message the second you hit send? Both politicians denied being involved in a corruption scandal.

verb + preposition + -ing form	apologise for, boast about/of, complain about, insist on, object to	A young celebrity boasted of having contacts with some major newspapers. The head teacher insisted on taking action against cyberbullying.
verb + object + preposition + -ing form	accuse of, blame for, charge with, congratulate on, praise for, suspect of	Caroline accused her new virtual friend of lying . She congratulated the reporter on asking her such a bold question.

Some verbs can be followed by more than one pattern, for example:

- advise:
I'd **advise being** more vigilant while downloading and installing free software.
My professor **advised me to stay** in touch with the school.
Experts **are advising that children should not spend** too much time online.
- demand:
The ticket inspector **demanded to see** our ID along with the tickets.
The librarian **demanded that we (should) switch off** our mobiles.

1 Complete the second sentence so that it has a similar meaning to the first. Use between three and six words in each gap.

- Sarah, you have broken into my Facebook account!
Sarah's brother accused _____ into his Facebook account.
- Using electronic translators in class is not allowed.
Our English teacher forbade _____ electronic translators in class.
- What is the daily circulation of this tabloid?
I wondered _____ of this tabloid was.
- I have over 400 friends on Facebook alone.
She boasted _____ on Facebook alone.
- I was not aware that the school's network had been hacked.
The administrator denied _____ the school's network had been hacked.
- I don't want you to call me a computer geek, I am not one!
Alex objected _____ as he is not one.