

## Quotation Marks

### APSU Writing Center Handout

Quotation marks are used to set off and represent exact language that comes from someone else.

They are necessary when directly quoting sources.

They always come in pairs. If you notice a “floating” quotation mark, you are likely missing its partner.

### Direct Quotations

A direct quotation uses another person’s exact words in your writing.

**Example:** Mr. Johnson exclaimed, "The alien spaceship appeared right before my own two eyes."

**Example:** Although Mr. Johnson has seen odd happenings on the farm, he stated that the spaceship "certainly takes the cake" when it comes to unexplainable activity.

### Periods and Commas

In American English, periods and commas are placed inside the closing quotation marks.

- **Incorrect Example:** She said, “I’ll be there soon”.
- **Correct Example:** She said, “I’ll be there soon.”

### Additional Rules for Using Quotation Marks

#### 1. Quotations Within Quotations

Use single quotation marks ( ‘ ’ ) for a quotation inside another quotation.

**Example:** The reporter told me, "When I interviewed the quarterback, he said they simply 'played a better game.'"

## 2. Quotation Marks for Irony or Special Meaning

Quotation marks may be used to show irony, skepticism, or special usage. However, they should not be used for emphasis. Use italics for emphasis instead.

- **Irony Example:** The great march of "progress" has left millions impoverished and hungry.
- **Emphasis Example:** The students are *not* allowed to smoke in the new dormitories.

## 3. Question Marks and Exclamation Points

Place question marks and exclamation points inside the quotation marks if they are part of the quoted material. Place them outside if they are part of your overall sentence.

- **Example:** The students at the local university exclaimed, "Yahoo! No final exams!"
- **Example:** Have the students read the poem "We Are Seven"?

## 4. Ellipses ( ... )

Use ellipses (...) to indicate that part of a quotation has been omitted.

- **Example:** Blackburn explains, "The universe appears to be globally warming itself...it might be an indication that the polar caps are melting" (87).

## Titles and Quotation Marks

**Use quotation marks for short works, including** book chapters, short stories, articles in magazines or journals, essays, articles in newspapers, web pages, scenes from plays, one-act plays, and episodes in television or radio programs, songs, and poems.

- **Example:** I like the song “You Are My Sunshine.”
- **Example:** Why did you choose to write about “We Are Seven”?

## Reference

Purdue Online Writing Lab. (n.d.). *Quotation marks*. Purdue University.

[https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/general\\_writing/punctuation/quotation\\_marks/index.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/general_writing/punctuation/quotation_marks/index.html)