

APSU Writing Center
Quotation Marks

Quotation Marks (“ ”)

- 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.'"

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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"?



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Reference

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

https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/general_writing/punctuation/quotation_marks/index.html