



Lunch and Learn Writing

Punctuating Quotations

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Basic Comma Rules

- To set off introductory material.
- Between 2 complete thoughts joined by a **coordinating conjunction**. (and, but, or, nor, for, so , yet)
- On both sides of words that interrupt the flow of the sentence.
- To set off a direct quotation.
- To separate elements in a series.
- In dates and addresses.



Quotation by Defination

- A Quotation refers to a group of words taken from a text or speech and repeated by someone other than the original author or speaker.
- A *direct* Quotation is a report of the exact words of an author or speaker. Direct quotations are placed inside quotation marks.
- An *indirect* quotation is a paraphrase of someone else's words: it reports on what a person said without using his or her exact words. Indirect quotations are not placed inside quotation marks.

The Why and When of Quotations

WHY: Use quotations to support an argument.

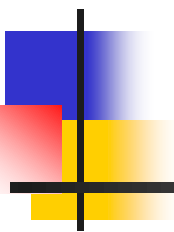
WHY: Use quotations to compare claims in multiple works and for the purpose of analysis.

WHEN: The author is an authority.

WHEN: The passage is well-phrased and vivid.

WHEN: The passage might be misinterpreted if paraphrased.

How to Punctuate a Quotation



Quotation marks are required whenever you are giving the exact words spoken or written by another person. Double quotation marks are used for indicating quotations. Single quotation marks indicate a quote within a quote.

Prof. McGee said, “The client letters will be due on Tuesday.”

Anne said, “Prof. McGee said, ‘The client letters will be due on Tuesday.’”



Inside or Outside

- When you are quoting a sentence or phrase that ends the sentence, the period should always go before the last quotation mark, even if it is not the end of the sentence in the original source.
 - “The question in every case is whether the words used are used in such circumstances and are of such a nature as to create a clear and present danger that they will bring about the substantive evils that Congress has a right to prevent.” *Schenck v United States*, 249 U.S. 47,52 (1919).
- If you are introducing a quote with a phrase such as – He said, The record states, or As Justice Scalia wrote, you must use a comma after the phrase and before the quotation marks.

- As Paul Revere said, “The British are coming!”

HOWEVER

Not every quote needs to be preceded by a comma. Make the quote flow grammatically within your sentence, without introducing extraneous commas. The following examples demonstrate the difference.

- *The witness testified, "I saw the whole thing."*
- *The witness testified that she "saw the whole thing."*

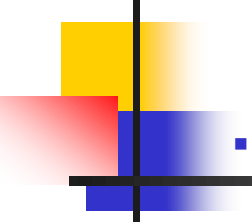
The first example has a comma to separate the dialogue from the lead-in. The second example would be grammatically incorrect with a comma stuck after the word *she* because the comma would separate the subject and verb.

- If you want to introduce a quote with an independent clause (a phrase that could stand alone as its own sentence), you must use a colon before the quotation marks:

- The defense attorney raised an objection: “That question is not relevant!”

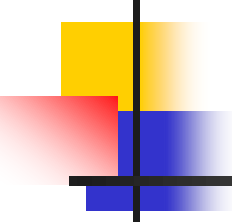
- If, however, you are integrating quoted material within your own sentence, you do not need any introductory punctuation.

- Evelyn described her father as a “stubborn old man.”

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- Question marks and exclamation points go inside the quotation marks if they are part of the original quotation:

- The security guard asked, “Whose car is this?”
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- But remain outside the quotation marks if they are part of your own sentence.
- Did the nurse say, “Dr. Adler will be coming soon”?
- (In this case, the nurse is not asking the question; the writer of the sentence is.)
- Semicolons and colons at the end of a quotation should be placed outside the quotation marks.
- A certain novel begins with the words, “Call me Ishmael”: do you know which novel it is?

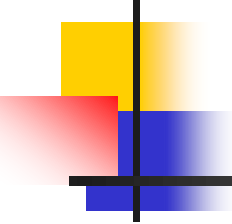
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- Mary described the game as “a real grudge match”: the players were ruthless. (The **colon** is outside the quotation marks.)
 - The law clerk searched the statute for hours for a definition of "appropriate medical screening"; eventually, he admitted that no statutory definition existed. (The **semi-colon** is outside the quotation mark.)

The **em dash** is also used for interjections/parenthetical elements in the middle of a sentence. These are often what they refer to as “asides.” Like parentheses, you must remember to close your em dash.

- On the side of the — “this is exactly what he said” — roadway as if he had seen it himself. (The dashes are outside the quotation marks.)

Ellipses...

If you are quoting a source and choose to remove one or more words from the quotation, you should indicate that with a space and three dots separated by spaces. If your quotation ends your sentence but is not the end of the quotation in the original source, the quotation should end with four dots with the fourth dot acting as the period. The same rule of spacing applies.



“It is . . . the . . . duty of the judicial department to say what the law is.”

(Ellipsis show that words are missing in two places within this quotation.)

Marshall declared that making pronouncements of law is the “duty of the judicial department”

(Ellipsis show there is more to this quotation or that it is a trailed off sentence.)

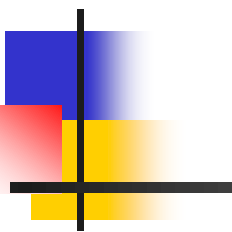
Block Quotations

50 Words or More



- **DO's**
 - **Start your quotation on its own line.**
 - Indent 0.5 spaces (5 spaces) on the right and left margins.
 - **Single-space**
 - Justify
 - The punctuation at the end of the block quotation goes before the citation.
 - **The citation following the block quote should not be indented but should begin at the left margin on the line following the quotation.**
- **DO NOT**
 - Put quotation marks around a block quote.

Block Quote Example



[T]his presumptive privilege must be considered in light of our historic commitment to the rule of law. This is nowhere more profoundly manifest than in our view that “the twofold aim [of criminal justice] is that guilt shall not escape or innocence suffer.” We have elected to employ an adversary system of criminal justice in which the parties contest all issues before a court of law To ensure that justice is done, it is imperative to the function of the courts that compulsory process be available for the production of evidence needed either by the prosecution or by the defense.

United States v. Nixon, 418 U.S. 683, 708-09 (1974) (citation omitted). The Court then balanced this interest against the evils of forced disclosure. *Id.* At 710.



The Last Word

- Remember, that quotations are the most effective when they're short and used sparingly.
- If you need to quote something with an error, use sic. *Sic* is a Latin term meaning “thus.” It is used to indicate that something incorrectly written is intentionally being left as it was in the original. *Sic* is usually italicized and always surrounded by brackets to indicate that it was not part of the original. Place [*sic*] right after the error.
- “They made there [*sic*] beds.”
- “They made their beds.”



Works Cited

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<https://www.sfbar.org/basf-bulletin/2013/june2013/legal-writing-quotations.aspx>.
- Columbia Law School. Writing Center.
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