

Quotation Marks

1. Use quotation marks to enclose direct quotations of the exact words someone spoke or wrote. The quote needs to be *exactly* as spoken or written—word for word, punctuation mark for punctuation mark, unless otherwise indicated with an ellipsis or brackets. If an indirect quote (or paraphrased material) is used to report someone's ideas without using the exact words, no quotation marks are necessary.

Example: "A foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds," wrote Ralph Waldo Emerson.

2. When a quotation of prose runs to more than four typed lines, or 40 words or more, the text is indented ten spaces from the left margin. No quotation marks are used as the indentation tells the reader that the material is a direct quote.

Example: At the conclusion of *Lord of the Flies*, Ralph and the other boys realize the horror of their actions:

The tears began to flow and sobs shook him. He gave himself up to them now for the first time on the island; great, shuddering spasms of grief that seemed to wrench his whole body. His voice rose under the black smoke before the burning wreckage of the island; and infected by that emotion, the other little boys began to shake and sob too. (186)

3. Single quotation marks are used to enclose a quote within a quotation.

Example: "Our father questioned us from the catechism," Norman Maclean writes, "saying 'What is the chief end of man?' And we answered together... 'Man's chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever,' which seemed to satisfy him."

4. Quotation marks enclose the titles of short works usually included as part of some longer work. These include short stories, newspaper and magazine articles, poems, songs, episodes of television and radio programs, and book chapters. Titles of self-contained works, such as books, plays, Web sites, television and radio programs, films, magazines, and newspapers, are put in italics or underlined.

Example: "The Trouble with Tribbles" is Susan's favorite *Star Trek* episode.

5. Quotation marks may be used to set off words used as words. These words may also be underlined or in italics. It is important to remain consistent with whichever method is chosen in a particular paper.

Example: The words "accept" and "except" are frequently confused.

6. Periods and commas *always* go inside quotation marks. This applies to all uses of quotation marks: for quoted material, for titles of works, and for words used as words. Colons and semicolons go after quotation marks. Question marks, exclamation points and dashes are placed within the quotation marks when they relate specifically to the related material; they come after the quotation marks when they relate to the entire sentence.

Example: "This is a stick-up," said the well-dressed young couple. "We want all your money." However, Jack knew this was about more than just "money." He thought he had a good idea for getting out of the situation, and he asked them, "What do you need my money for?" The young male pulled out a gun and shot Jack between the eyes before taking his wallet and gold watch. Does that sound like it was a "good idea"?