

= Winston tastes good like a cigarette should =

" Winston tastes good like a cigarette should " is an enduring slogan that appeared in newspaper , magazine , radio , and television advertisements for Winston cigarettes from the brand 's introduction in 1954 until 1972 . It is one of the best @-@ known American tobacco advertising campaigns . In 1999 , Advertising Age ranked the jingle eighth @-@ best out of all the radio and television jingles that aired in the United States in the 20th century .

The deliberate use of " like " rather than " as " was provided by advertising agency William Esty Co . , and the overall campaign was directed by Esty executives Wendell Adams and Arline Lunny , Lunny serving as producer / director of most of the visual and recording production related to the campaign in its initial years . Adams was a classically trained musician in his own right , but singer / model / pianist Margaret Johnson ghost wrote the jingle and , along with her husband , Travis Johnson , recorded it with their group , the Song Spinners . Johnson 's insertion of the two quick hand claps before the word " cigarette " caught America 's ear by surprise and had much to do with the jingle 's success . (A second Winston jingle by Johnson , using the folk tune " Skip to My Lou " , has faded into obscurity .)

In a departure for the time , the advertising campaign was also used to target distinct niche groups apart from its core clientele of " WASP " smokers , such as American Jews and African Americans .

A catchy jingle and ad campaign , it has come to embody a piece of Americana , and has even seeped into the consciousness of people who were too young (or not even alive) to remember the campaign when it occurred . The slogan was so well @-@ remembered that it was added to Simpson 's Contemporary Quotations in 1988 .

= = Beginnings = =

Future R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company president Bowman Gray Jr. was in charge of marketing Winstons , which were a new addition to the R.J. Reynolds line in 1954 . Gray listened to advertising employees from the William Esty Co . , and the slogan " Winston tastes good like a cigarette ought to " was considered , then replaced by the more succinct " Winston tastes good like a cigarette should . "

The first print ad appeared in the Pittsburgh Post @-@ Gazette in September 1954 , with an ad in Life following the next month . In 1955 , Winston would take over as the sponsor of Walter Cronkite 's news show , as well as Garry Moore 's variety show ; it was at this time that the first television advertisements aired .

= = Radio and television = =

In the radio and television advertisements , the slogan is presented in a singsong fashion with a noticeable two @-@ beat clap near the end , so the jingle would sound like Win @-@ ston tastes good like a (clap clap) cigarette should . The " clap " noise was sometimes substituted for actors in the commercials knocking twice against a truck carrying Winston cigarettes , or an actor flicking his lighter twice to the same conceit .

Winston cigarettes were sponsors of such television series as The Beverly Hillbillies and The Flintstones . The former series would show stars Buddy Ebsen , Irene Ryan , and Nancy Kulp extolling the virtues of Winstons while smoking them and reciting the jingle . The latter series would later come under fire for advertising cigarettes on an animated series watched by many children , but Winston pulled their involvement with the series after the Pebbles Flintstone character was born in 1963 .

= = Grammar controversy = =

During the campaign 's long run in the media , many criticized the slogan as grammatically incorrect and that it should say , " Winston tastes good as a cigarette should . " Ogden Nash , in The New

Yorker , published a poem that ran " Like goes Madison Avenue , like so goes the nation . " Walter Cronkite , then hosting The Morning Show , refused to say the line as written , and an announcer was used instead .

Malcolm Gladwell , in The Tipping Point , says that this " ungrammatical and somehow provocative use of ' like ' instead of ' as ' created a minor sensation " in 1954 and implies that the phrase itself was responsible for vaulting the brand to second place in the U.S. market . Winston overtook Pall Mall cigarettes as the # 1 cigarette in the United States in 1966 , while the advertising campaign continued to make an impression on the mass media .

In the fall of 1961 , a small furor enveloped the literary and journalistic communities in the United States when Merriam @-@ Webster published its Third New International Dictionary . In the dictionary , the editors refused to condemn the use of " like " as a conjunction , and cited " Winston tastes good like a cigarette should " as an example of popular colloquial use . After publication of Webster 's Third , The New York Times called the edition " bolshevik , " and the Chicago Daily News wrote that the transgression signified " a general decay in values . "

When the players in The Beverly Hillbillies spoke the line , they stretched the grammatical boundaries further :

Jed : Winston tastes good ...

Granny : Like a cigarette had ought @-@ a !

In 1970 and 1971 , Winston sought to revamp its image and chose to respond to many grammarians ' qualms with the slogan , " What do you want , good grammar or good taste ? " Mad magazine published a parody of this on the back cover of its January 1971 issue ; set in a cemetery , it featured four tombstones with epitaphs written in the past tense (" Winston tasted good like a cigarette should 've " " You mean ' as a cigarette should 've ' " " What did you want , good grammar or good taste ? " " I wanted to live a lot longer than this ! ") . With the new slogan in wide use , " Winston tastes good like a cigarette should " was retired permanently in 1972 .

In 1981 , actor James Garner claimed responsibility for the wording of the slogan during an interview with Playboy magazine . Garner , who narrated the original commercial , stated that his first action ever to be captured on film was to misread the line that had been provided to him . However , as noted above , the advertisements first appeared in print before their debut on television , which would cast doubt on Garner 's claim .