

Punctuation – Quotation Marks

Punctuation – Quotation Marks

Are used to reproduce exactly what someone said.

Capitalisation and punctuation rules apply.

There are UK and US variations.

Can be a single word, a phrase, or even a whole sentence.

Can be single ('...') or double ("...") quotation marks.

Both are used in nested quotes.

Can be used to highlight a specific part of a question.

Can be used sarcastically or ironically.

Can be used with titles of films, books, and other creative works.

Can be used as a short form for feet and inches.

Quotation Marks – Examples #1

Capitalisation and punctuation rules apply.

- She told me, “**B**reakfast is ready”.
- Bob told me, “**Y**ou will get your book back tomorrow”.
- “**B**reakfast is ready”, she told me.
- “**Y**ou will get your book back tomorrow”, **h**e told me.

Quotation Marks – Examples #2

Quotation marks, exclamation marks, and question marks.

If a question is being quoted, then the question mark goes inside the quotation marks.

The same rule applies to exclamation marks.

- She asked me, “When do you want breakfast?”.
- “I can’t believe you actually said that!”, Steve told me.

If the narrator is asking the question, then the question mark goes outside the quotation marks.

- Did the boss really say, “You’re totally incompetent.”?
- I’m amazed that her Mum said, “Yes”!

Quotation Marks – Examples #3

There are UK and US variations.

In the UK, the full stop goes after the quotation mark.

In the US, the period goes inside the quotation mark.

- UK: She told me, “I will be home late this evening”.
- US: She told me, “I will be home late this evening.”

- UK: I told her, “That dress is very pretty”.
- US: I told her, “That dress is very pretty.”

Quotation Marks – Examples #4

Are used to reproduce exactly what someone said.

- “Breakfast is ready”, she told me.
- Bob said to me, “I will bring your book back tomorrow. I promise”

However, quotation marks are not used in reported speech.

- She told me that breakfast was ready.
- Bob promised that he would bring my book back tomorrow.

Quotation Marks – Examples #5

Can be a single word, a phrase, or even a whole sentence.

- The hospital spokesman described her condition as ‘satisfactory’.
- He said that this was “neither the time nor the place” for such a discussion.
- John said, “I hate working here.”

Quotation Marks – Examples #6

A multiple paragraph quote is treated differently.

Each paragraph gets a starting quotation mark.

Only the last paragraph gets a closing quotation mark.

➤ Peter said, “Today is the start of a wonderful journey

“The second paragraph contains a lot more information ...

“This is expanded upon in the third paragraph ...

“Finally, I summarise the main points of the speech.”

Quotation Marks – Examples #7

Can be single ('...') or double ("...") quotation marks.

It doesn't really matter which ones you use.

I tend to use single quotes for words and short phrases and double quotes for longer phrases and complete sentences.

- The hospital spokesman described her condition as 'satisfactory'.
- John said, "I hate working here."

Quotation Marks – Examples #8

Both are used in nested quotes.

If there is a quote within a quote, we use different quotation marks to differentiate them.

We usually use single quotes for the inner quotation.

The important thing is to be consistent.

- John told me, “The boss said, ‘I need this by Friday.’”
- Paul said, “The teacher told us, ‘The test will be on Tuesday.’”

Quotation Marks – Examples #9

Can be used to highlight a specific part of a question.

- The boss keeps saying that we must all make sacrifices – what does he mean by ‘sacrifices’?
- What part of “stop that” don’t you understand?

Quotation Marks – Examples #10

Can be used sarcastically or ironically.

You can use quotes to show the part of the sentence that you mean sarcastically.

- I'm sure the politician will keep his 'promise' ...
- The teacher said the homework would be easy – it was so “easy”.

Quotation Marks – Examples #11

Can be used with titles of films, books, and other creative works.

There are several options that you can use here.

You can put the title in quotes, or italics.

If you put the title in italics, you usually use quotation marks for individual parts of the complete item.

No matter which variation you choose, please be consistent.

- On December 31st, we always sing “Auld Lang Syne”.
- On December 31st, we always sing *Auld Lang Syne*.
- The track ‘Natural Science’ on Rush’s *Permanent Waves* is awesome.

Quotation Marks – Examples #12

Can be used as a short form for feet and inches.

A single quotation mark (') means 'feet'.

A double quotation mark (") means 'inches'.

➤ He is 5 feet, 9 inches tall – he is 5'9".

This is the only time in the US that the full stop goes outside the quotation mark.