Quotation Marks (" ")

Material that is quoted or emphasized is enclosed in quotation marks. Quotation marks are always used in pairs; you must have quotation marks at the beginning and at the end of quoted material. When opening quotation marks are placed at the beginning of a quote, the closing quotation marks are not added until the speaker changes or the quotation is interrupted. In word processing, use curved or "smart" quotes, rather than straight quotes, which indicate inches.

Rule #1:

Use double quotation marks to enclose a direct quotation (the exact words spoken by someone). DO NOT use quotation marks to enclose an indirect quotation (when the meaning is paraphrased the exact words are not used). Long direct quotations (more than three typewritten lines) are usually written without quotation marks and are indented from the left and sometimes the right margin. If a long direct quotation spans more than one paragraph, place quotation marks at the

Examples of Rule #1:

Robert said, "I will not be home on time." (direct quotation)
Robert said he would not be home on time. (indirect quotation)

Rule #2:

Use double quotation marks around unusual, unfamiliar, or slang terms or to indicate that words are being used in a special way. No quotation marks are necessary in later references after the term has been introduced the first time. DO NOT use quotation marks around commonly known technical terms. Consult a current dictionary to determine if a word is in common usage and no longer needs quotation marks.

Examples of Rule #2:

We call the invention a "windoor" because it is both a window and a door.
He thought he was distinguished; I thought he was a "stuffed shirt."
The van has a CD player and a cellular phone.

Rule #3:

Use double quotation marks to indicate the titles of parts of books, magazines, journals, or newspapers. The title of the book, magazine, journal, or newspaper itself is underlined or placed in italics. Thus, a magazine title is underlined or in italics; the title of an article in the magazine is in quotation marks.

Example of Rule #3:

Did you read the article "Writing Memos" in Communication

Rule #4:

Use double quotation marks for titles of essays, lectures, songs, short poems, short stories, and episodes of a television or radio program. DO NOT use quotation marks, however, around the title of your own paper. Use them only if you refer to the paper in another document.
Examples of Rule #4:

The keynote speaker's address was entitled "How to Live With Stress."
Celine Dion sang "My Heart Will Go On."

Punctuation with quotation marks

Rule #5:

After an introductory verb, use a comma and capitalize the first word of a complete sentence being quoted.

Example of Rule #5:

Peggy announced, "The party will start at noon."

Rule #6:

Set off the quotation from the rest of the sentence with a comma. DO NOT use a comma if the quotation is already set off with a question mark or an exclamation mark. If information preceding the quotation is a complete sentence, however, separate the information from the quotation with a colon. (See Rule #7.)

Examples of Rule #6:

"Please bring coffee," Jennifer said.
"When will I have the computer class?" he asked.

Rule #7:

After a complete sentence, use a colon and begin the quotation with a capital letter.

Example of Rule #7:

The instructor said all courses are scheduled in advance: "Our first class will start at the end of August."

Rule #8:

When the quoted material is woven into a sentence, do not use any punctuation except the quotation marks.

Example of Rule #8:

The instructor indicated she was "making every effort" to give–to–date training.

Rule #9:

Periods and commas always go inside quotation marks (even if they are not in the original quotation). When documenting the source of a quotation, place the period after the citation; DO NOT include it as part of the quotation.
Examples of Rule #9:

- My grandfather used to say, "Every dog has its day."
- Berg's study stated, "The city is growing quickly" (15).

Rule #10:

Semicolons and colons always go outside quotation marks.

Example of Rule #10:

Kelly Sole told me, "I will be unable to attend the meeting";

Rule #11:

Question marks and exclamation marks go inside quotation marks if only the material being quoted is a question or an exclamation. If the entire sentence is a question or an exclamation, the question mark or exclamation mark goes outside the quotation marks.

Examples of Rule #11:

- Gloria asked, "Where are you going?"
- Did Gloria ask, "Where are you going"?

Rule #12:

If the quotation is at the end of a sentence, the question mark or exclamation mark serves as punctuation to end the sentence. DO NOT add a period.

Examples of Rule #12:

- Correct: Jorge inquired, "How late can nominations be submitted for approval?"
- Incorrect: Jorge inquired, "How late can nominations be submitted for approval?".

Rule #13:

Use single quotation marks for a quote within another quote.

Example of Rule #13:

The newspaper stated, "According to the attorney,"