

How to Quote Prose

- ❖ Italicize the titles of works published independently, like books or magazines:

Adventures of Huckleberry Finn or *Shakespeare Quarterly*

- ❖ Use quotation marks for the titles of works published within larger works, like essays, articles, chapters, or short stories

“Anatomy of the Action Picture” or “On the Value of *Hamlet*”

- ❖ Cite page numbers up to 100 like this: 34-37; above 100, you repeat only the last two figures: 211-12 (but of course, 397-405 and 96-102).

- ❖ Periods and commas ALWAYS go inside quotation marks:

“Periods and commas,” says Dr. Womack, “ALWAYS go inside quotation marks.”

- ❖ If a prose quotation runs four lines or less, put it in quotation marks and incorporate it in the text:

According to Stephen Booth: “Shakespeare was almost certainly homosexual, bisexual, or heterosexual. The sonnets provide no evidence on the matter” (548).

- ❖ If a prose quotation runs to more than four lines, set it off from your text by beginning a new line, indenting one inch from the left margin, and type it double-spaced, without adding quotation marks. A colon generally introduces an indented quotation.

In *No Country for Old Men*, Cormac McCarthy demonstrates his ability to describe complex physical actions clearly and vividly:

He was slightly bent over when Chigurh squatted and scooted his manacled hands beneath him to the back of his knees. In the same motion he sat and rocked backwards and passed the chain under his feet and then stood instantly and effortlessly. If it looked like a thing he'd practiced many times it was. He dropped his cuffed hands over the deputy's head and leaped into the air and slammed both knees against the back of the deputy's neck and hauled back on the chain. (6)

- ❖ If you need to quote two or more paragraphs, indent the first line of each paragraph an additional quarter inch. If the first sentence quoted does not begin a paragraph in the source, however, do not indent it the extra amount. Indent only the lines of the successive paragraphs.

J. K. Rowling can evoke a character's personality in just a few sentences:

Professor McGonagall was again different. Harry had been quite right to think she wasn't a teacher to cross. Strict and clever, she gave them a talking to the moment they sat down in her first class.

"Transfiguration is some of the most complex and dangerous magic you will learn at Hogwarts," she said. "Anyone messing around in my class will leave and not come back. You have been warned." (133-34);

- ❖ Indicate the omission of words, phrases, or sentences from a within a quoted passage with an ellipsis, three periods with a space before each and a space after the last (. . .). Do NOT use an ellipsis to begin or end a quotation.

Displaying his prodigious knowledge of English grammar, David Foster Wallace opines: "*Hopefully* at the beginning of a sentence . . . actually functions . . . as a 'sentence adverb' that indicates the speaker's attitude about the state of affairs described by the sentence" (100-01).

- ❖ When the ellipsis coincides with the end of a quoted sentence, mark the end of the sentence with a period, followed by three spaced periods—that is, four periods.

Robert Kaplan explains the sources of Winston Churchill's insight into Hitler's motives:

Churchill saw through Hitler early on, because Churchill was familiar with monsters to a degree that Chamberlain was not. . . . He was a man with fewer illusions, partly because he had spent so much of his life—beyond his school years—reading and writing about history and experiencing Britain's colonial wars firsthand as a soldier and journalist. (18)