

Quick Guide

A quotation can be a single word or an entire paragraph. Choose quotations carefully, keep them as brief as possible, and use them only when they are interesting, revealing, or necessary in the development of your text. A paper that is quotation heavy usually means a writer has not done much independent thinking. When you do quote material directly, be sure that the capitalization, punctuation, and spelling are the same as that in the original work. Any changes you make should be clearly marked for your readers.

Short Quotations

If a quotation is four typed lines or fewer, work it into the body of your paper and put quotation marks around it.

Long Quotations

Quotations of more than four typed lines should be set off from the rest of the writing by indenting each line 10 spaces and double-spacing the material. Do not use quotation marks.

In quoting two or more paragraphs, indent the first line of each paragraph three spaces. (Leave two spaces after a longer quotation before you cite a parenthetical reference.) Generally, a colon is used to introduce quotations set off from the text. (See "Quotation Marks" in the index for more.)

Quoting Poetry

Three lines of verse or fewer should be worked into your writing and punctuated with quotation marks. Use a diagonal (/) between lines of verse in your text. For verse quotations of four lines or more, indent each line 10 spaces and double-space. Do not use quotation marks.

To show that you have left out a line or more of verse, make a line of spaced periods the approximate length of a complete line of the poem.

Partial Quotations

If you want to leave out part of the quotation, use an ellipsis (. . .) is three periods with a space before and after each one. (See "Ellipsis" in the index.)

Note • Anything you take out of a quotation should not change the author's original meaning.

Adding to Quotations

Use brackets [like this] to signify any material you add within a quotation to help clarify its meaning.

"Adam was the only man who, when he said a good thing, knew that nobody had said it before him."

—Mark Twain



Citing Sources

185 Parenthetical References

The *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* suggests giving credit in the body of your research paper rather than in footnotes or endnotes. To give credit, simply insert the appropriate information (usually author and page number) in parentheses after the words or ideas borrowed from another source. Place them where a pause would naturally occur to avoid disrupting the flow of your writing (usually at the end of a sentence).

At the man's feet is a sign that reads: "Won't you help me? I'm cold and homeless and lonely. God Bless You" (Chambers 11).

Keep two points in mind when citing sources: First, indicate as precisely as you can where you found this information. (Use page numbers, volume numbers, acts, chapters, etc.) Second, make sure all of your sources are listed in the Works Cited section of your paper.

186 One Author: Citing a Complete Work

No parenthetical reference is needed if you identify the author in your text. (See the first entry below.) However, you must give the author's last name in a parenthetical reference if it is not mentioned in the text. (See the second entry below.) A parenthetical reference could begin with an editor, a translator, a speaker, or an artist instead of the author if that is how the work is listed in the Works Cited section.

With Author in Text (This is the preferred way of citing a complete work.)

In *No Need for Hunger*, Robert Spitzer recommends that the U.S. government develop a new foreign policy to help Third World countries overcome poverty and hunger.

Without Author in Text

No Need for Hunger recommends that the U.S. government develop a new foreign policy to help Third World countries overcome poverty and hunger (Spitzer).