

AMA Manual of Style

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Quotation Marks

Cheryl Iverson

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Item type: section

Quotation marks are used to indicate material that is taken directly from another source. | Use quotation marks to enclose a direct quotation of no more than 4 lines from textual material or speeches (for longer material, see also , Quotation Marks, Block Quotations). When the quotation marks enclose conversational dialogue, there is no limit to the length that may be set in run-on format. In all quoted material, follow the wording, spelling, and punctuation of the original exactly. The only time this rule does not apply is when the quoted material, although a complete sentence or part of a

Dialogue

Cheryl Iverson

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With conversational dialogue, enclose the opening word and the final word in quotation marks. “Please don’t schedule the surgery for a Tuesday.” “OK, if that’s inconvenient for you, I won’t.” |

Quotations

Cheryl Iverson

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Use quotation marks to enclose a direct quotation of no more than 4 lines from textual material or speeches (for longer material, see also , Quotation Marks, Block Quotations). When the quotation marks enclose conversational dialogue, there is no limit to the length that may be set in run-on format. In all quoted material, follow the wording, spelling, and punctuation of the original exactly. The only time this rule does not apply is when the quoted material, although a complete sentence or part of a complete sentence in its original source, is now used as part of another complete sentence.

Titles

Cheryl Iverson

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Within titles (including titles of articles, references, and tables), centered heads, and run-in sideheads, use double quotation marks. The “Sense” of Humor |

Single Quotation Marks

Cheryl Iverson

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Use single quotation marks for quotations within quotations. He looked at us and said, “As my patients always told me, ‘Be a good listener.’” |

Placement

Cheryl Iverson

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Place closing quotation marks outside commas and periods, inside colons and semicolons. Place question marks, dashes, and exclamation points inside quotation marks only when they are part of the quoted material. If they apply to the whole statement, place them outside the quotation marks. Why bother to perform autopsies at all if the main finding is invariably “edema and congestion of the viscera”? The clinician continues to ask, “Why did he die?” “I’ll lend you my stethoscope for clinic” then she remembered the last time she had lent it and said, “On second thought, I’ll be needing it myself.” (Note: Commas

Omission of Opening or Closing Quotation Marks

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The opening quotation mark should be omitted when an article beginning with a stand-up or dropped initial capital letter also begins with a quotation. It is best, however, to avoid this construction. octors need some patients,” a sage had said. When excerpting long passages that consist of several paragraphs, use opening double quotation marks before each paragraph and closing quotation marks only at the end of the final paragraph. (See also , Ellipses, and , Block Quotations.) |

Coined Words, Slang

Cheryl Iverson

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Coined words, slang, nicknames, and words or phrases used ironically or facetiously may be enclosed in quotation marks at first mention. Thereafter, omit quotation marks. (See also , Typography, Specific Uses of Fonts, Italics.) We further hope that, above all, those who have been fed only “docufiction” on this matter, as if it were truth, will cease to be misled. Nelson Essentials of Pediatrics is not a ... synopsis of or a companion to the Nelson Textbook of Pediatrics, although initially our associates dubbed it “Baby Nelson,” “Half Nelson,” and “Junior Nelson.” It has been said that shoes and latrines are

Apologetic Quotation Marks

Cheryl Iverson

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Quotation marks are sometimes used around words for special effect or to indicate irony. In most instances, however, they are unnecessary. Using their own finances and being informed about the economics of the approach, some may opt for the “boutique class” of health care. |

So-called

Cheryl Iverson

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Item type: section

A word or phrase following so-called should not be enclosed in quotation marks. The so-called harm principle holds that competent adults should have freedom of action unless they pose a risk to themselves or to the community. |