



Palm Beach Atlantic University
Center for Writing Excellence

DIRECT QUOTATIONS

Direct quotation *defined*:

A direct quotation is the use of another person's exact words in an original paper or assignment. Short quotations (4 typed lines or less) must be integrated into a paragraph with proper punctuation.

Simple Rules:

- Quote only when necessary; for instance, when the author's own words are so unique that they cannot be paraphrased.
- Enclose the quoted phrase with a *pair* of "double quotation marks."
- Keep punctuation (like commas and periods) *inside* the final quotation marks."

Assimilating Quotations into Surrounding Text:

- When a quotation that is a complete sentence is introduced midsentence, it begins with a lowercase word *even if the original starts with a capital letter*.
Remembering that "resistance to tyranny is obedience to God" honors the Framers and fosters traditional American patriotism.
- When the quotation has a more removed syntactic relationship with the rest of the sentence, the initial letter remains capitalized.
As Jefferson advised, "Resistance to tyranny is obedience to God."
- However, if the quotation in the original work is not a complete sentence, but it forms a complete sentence in the quoted context, a lowercase letter may be changed to a capital letter (if appropriate, following the above assimilating techniques).
- When introducing a quote, either a colon or a comma is appropriate.

In a formal context, quotes are introduced as follows: "Colons are used when words like *thus* and *as follows* are used."

When identifying a speaker, "commas are used after words like *said*, *asked*, *replied*." (Though colons are not wrong in this context, they should be used sparingly.)