

Quotes & Attribution Tipsheet

1. **Put commas and periods inside the quotation marks.**
2. **Attribute every quotation to the source, even if it's obvious who said it.**
3. **Place attribution after the first sentence of a multi-sentence quote.**
4. **Attribute each quote only once.**
5. **Report only what people said, not how they feel or what they believe.**
6. **Objects and institutions cannot speak.** It's better to attribute actions and announcements to people.
7. **Do not put quotations around anything that is not a direct quote.**
8. **Do not use quotation marks to emphasize a word or phrase.**
Putting quotation marks around jargon does nothing to explain what a term means.
9. **Avoid repeating the reporter's questions in a story;** just write the answers.
10. **Identify every source on first reference by using first name, last name, and some description.**
11. **Use simple words of attribution.** *Said, added, and noted* are the most acceptable.
12. **Use ellipses** (three periods) to indicate that words have been left out.
13. **Use brackets** to add words of clarification.
14. When the attribution is at the **beginning** of the quotation, the order is: **attribution + colon + quotes + caps**
15. When the attribution is at the **end** of the quotation, the order is: **comma + quote + attribution + period**
16. **Do not presume to know what people are thinking** or how they are feeling in their quotes; use only periods and question marks for terminal punctuation.
17. **Place lengthy description of the speaker after the attribution,** as in *said John Doe, a psychologist who specializes in cybercriminal profiling.*

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