

PUNCTUATION 2: SPEECH MARKS

There are some rules which if learnt make using speech marks easy!

Put speech marks around the actual words that are spoken.

Example: Kelly said, 'Strawberry milkshakes are great.'

Use a capital letter when someone starts to speak.

Example: She whispered, 'It's time to go.'

Use a comma before the speech begins.

Example: He said, 'I've found a solution to the problem.'

If the whole sentence ends when the speech ends, put a full stop before the closing speech mark.

Example: Bob said, 'We're going on a treasure hunt.'

If the sentence continues after the speech, put a comma before the closing speech mark.

Example: 'I think that we should take some cake with us,' he said.

When a new person speaks, start on a new line.

Example: 'Do you like football?' asked Chris.
'No, I only like athletics,' Jenny replied.

Single or double speech marks?

If you use single speech marks (as in the examples above) you should use double speech marks for quotations within quotations. Some people prefer to reverse this convention.

Example: 'When I say "immediately," I mean right now,' said the teacher.

Or: He asked, "Why did she call me 'traitor'?"

Either is acceptable, but be consistent!