



Integrating Sources

In order to use a source effectively in your paper, you must integrate it into your argument in a way that makes it clear to your reader not only which ideas come from that source, but also what the source is adding to your own thinking. In other words, each source you use in a paper should be there for a reason, and your reader should not have to guess what that reason is. When you're finished drafting your paper, you should always go back and make sure that you have made conscious decisions about how and where to use each source and that you've made the reasons for those decisions clear to your readers. The following section offers guidance about how to make these decisions, as well as advice on the nuts and bolts of integrating sources into your paper.

Sources and Your Assignment

The first step in any research process is to make sure you read your assignment carefully so that you understand what you are being asked to do. In addition to knowing how many sources you're expected to consult and what types of sources are relevant to your assignment, you should make sure you understand the role that sources should play in your paper.

For example, a common assignment at Harvard will ask you to test a theory by looking at that theory in relation to a text or series of texts. In this type of assignment, one source—i.e., the source that lays out the theory—will play a large role, as will the text or texts you're considering in relation to that theory. You may not be expected to consult any other sources. On the other hand, for an assignment that asks you to stake out a position for yourself in an ongoing debate, you may need to consult a number of sources to figure out the major positions in that debate before you can decide where you stand on the issue. For this type of assignment, you may also rely on sources to help you understand the context of the debate, to find the evidence that you will analyze to figure out where you stand on the issue, and to learn the definitions of relevant terms. Yet another assignment might ask you to formulate your own question on a broad topic and then answer that question. In this case, you will likely use sources in several different ways—as background information that will help you arrive at a question, as evidence and expert commentary that will help you answer that question, and as opposing views that you will take into consideration as you formulate your argument.

Many assignments will ask you to perform a combination of tasks, with the expectation that sources will play multiple roles in your paper and that you will make your own decisions about how to use at least some of your sources. If you don't understand what you're expected to do with the sources you find for a particular assignment, consult your instructor or a writing tutor.





Understanding your instructor's expectations will help you to choose appropriate sources and to use them effectively in your paper.

A Source's Role in Your Paper

When you begin to draft your paper, you will need to decide what role each of your sources will play in your argument. In other words, you will need to figure out what you're going to do with the source in your paper. As you consider what role each source will play in your paper, you should begin by thinking about the role that source played in your research process. How did the source shape your thinking about the topic when you encountered it? If a source provided you with context for a particular problem or issue, then it may well do the same thing for your reader. If a source provided you with evidence that supports your claim, then you will probably want to lay out that evidence to your reader and explain how it leads you to the position you've staked out in your paper. If a source made an argument that challenged your own argument and made you refine your thinking, then you'll likely want to introduce that source in your paper as a counterargument before explaining why you have concluded that your own argument is stronger. On the other hand, if a source offered evidence or ideas that complicated your own thinking and made you shift your argument, you should explain how the source has led you to your new position.

Some assignments will ask you to respond in a specific way to a source. For example, you might be asked to test a theory developed in one source by using a body of evidence found in another source. Or you might be asked to respond to a claim or assumption laid out in a particular source. Other assignments may specify the number of sources you should use, but will not include instructions on how you should use those sources.

Here are some common roles that sources can play in your argument:

- Provide primary evidence: a source can serve as the main object of your analysis, or offer evidence that has not yet been analyzed by others.
- Establish what's at stake: a source can present or highlight a problem, question or issue that provides a "so what" for your essay.
- Serve as a lens: a source can offer a theory or concept that gives you a framework or focus for analyzing your evidence and building your argument.
- Provide key terms/concepts: a source offers a central concept or key term that you apply to your own argument.
- Provide context: a source can offer background (historical, cultural, etc.) that readers need to understand the argument you're making or the issue you're analyzing.





- Serve as a supporting expert: you want to offer a claim, and you cite a scholar or researcher who notices the same or similar idea, thereby supporting your claim.
- Advance your argument: a source provides a new insight that helps establish a main supporting claim to your overall argument; your use of that source should usually agree with and extend the idea or insight, demonstrating its application to your own analysis.
- Provide a complication or counterargument: a source introduces an idea or raises a question that presents a problem for your argument, or an objection to contend with; your response to that complication enriches and adds nuance to your discussion.
- Create a critical conversation: one source offers an idea that another source can respond to, sometimes in a very direct way (i.e. critic A explicitly disagrees with critic B), or by providing a different angle on or approach to the question (i.e. source A offers a new way of thinking about an idea raised in source B, a different "take" on the issue).

Remember that a source can—and often will—play more than one role in your argument. Each time you mention a source in your paper, you should make sure you have a clear sense of what you're doing with that source in your paper.

Choosing Relevant Parts of a Source

When you use sources in a paper, remember that your main focus should always be on what **you** are saying, rather than on what any individual source is saying. You will, of course, devote portions of your paper to what your sources have to say, but these sources should always be discussed in the context of your own argument. Your reader will be interested in the ideas the source offers, but this interest will be primarily in terms of how that source contributes to, or is relevant to, your own argument.

In order to make the strongest argument you can, you should always be trying to strike a balance between your sources and your own voice. Remember that your paper is just that—your paper—and you don't want it to be overwhelmed by source material. Say, for example, you were asked to apply Marx's theory of labor alienation to the case of McDonald's service described by Robin Leidner, as Joanna Li did in an Expos essay. While you'd certainly want to devote a section of your paper to summarizing the relevant parts of Marx's work and the relevant discussion of McDonald's workers, you would not want your paper to be overwhelmed by your summaries of other people's ideas. Your instructor will be interested in hearing how you think Marx's work applies to or illuminates the case studied by Leidner—and how you think the theory applies to a category of workers Marx did not discuss.

When you consult multiple sources for a research paper, you might find yourself trying to strike a delicate balance between the voices of those sources and your own voice. In that situation, it





might be helpful to think of yourself as part of a conversation among scholars who are interested in the same topic. Your paper is your chance to speak in the conversation, but you also need to accurately and clearly represent the other participants in the conversation.

As you think about what portion of a source to use in your paper, keep thinking back to what you're trying to do in your paper—and how the source helps you accomplish this goal. When you choose the parts of a source that are most relevant to your argument, you may be surprised to find that you are using less of that source (and therefore spending more time analyzing how it fits into your argument) than you originally imagined you would.

Summarizing, Paraphrasing, and Quoting

Depending on the conventions of your discipline, you may have to decide whether to summarize a source, paraphrase a source, or quote from a source.

Scholars in the humanities tend to summarize, paraphrase, and quote texts; social scientists and natural scientists rely primarily on summary and paraphrase.

When and how to summarize

When you summarize, you provide your readers with a condensed version of an author's key points. A summary can be as short as a few sentences or much longer, depending on the complexity of the text and the level of detail you wish to provide to your readers. You will need to summarize a source in your paper when you are going to refer to that source and you want your readers to understand the source's argument, main ideas, or plot (if the source is a novel, film, or play) before you lay out your own argument about it, analysis of it, or response to it.

Before you summarize a source in your paper, you should decide what your reader needs to know about that source in order to understand your argument. For example, if you are making an argument about a novel, you should avoid filling pages of your paper with details from the book that will distract or confuse your reader. Instead, you should add details sparingly, going only into the depth that is necessary for your reader to understand and appreciate your argument. Similarly, if you are writing a paper about a journal article, you will need to highlight the most relevant parts of the argument for your reader, but you should not include all of the background information and examples. When you have to decide how much summary to put in a paper, it's a good idea to consult your instructor about whether you are supposed to assume your reader's knowledge of the sources.





Guidelines for summarizing a source in your paper

- Identify the author and the source.
- Represent the original source accurately.
- Present the source's central claim clearly.
- Don't summarize each point in the same order as the original source; focus on giving your reader the most important parts of the source
- Use your own words. Don't provide a long quotation in the summary unless the actual language from the source is going to be important for your reader to see.

Example

Stanley Milgram (1974) reports that ordinarily compassionate people will be cruel to each other if they are commanded to be by an authority figure. In his experiment, a group of participants were asked to administer electric shocks to people who made errors on a simple test. In spite of signs that those receiving shock were experiencing great physical pain, 25 of 40 subjects continued to administer electric shocks. These results held up for each group of people tested, no matter the demographic. The transcripts of conversations from the experiment reveal that although many of the participants felt increasingly uncomfortable, they continued to obey the experimenter, often showing great deference for the experimenter. Milgram suggests that when people feel responsible for carrying out the wishes of an authority figure, they do not feel responsible for the actual actions they are performing. He concludes that the increasing division of labor in society encourages people to focus on a small task and eschew responsibility for anything they do not directly control.

This summary of Stanley Milgram's 1974 essay, "The Perils of Obedience," provides a brief overview of Milgram's 12-page essay, along with an APA style parenthetical citation. You would write this type of summary if you were discussing Milgram's experiment in a paper in which you were not supposed to assume your reader's knowledge of the sources. Depending on your assignment, your summary might be even shorter.

When you include a summary of a paper in your essay, you must cite the source. If you were using APA style in your paper, you would include a parenthetical citation in the summary, and you would also include a full citation in your reference list at the end of your paper. For the essay by Stanley Milgram, your citation in your references list would include the following information:

Milgram, S. (1974). The perils of obedience. In L.G. Kirszner & S.R. Mandell (Eds.),
The Blair reader (pp.725-737).





When and how to paraphrase

When you paraphrase from a source, you restate the source's ideas in your own words. Whereas a summary provides your readers with a condensed overview of a source (or part of a source), a paraphrase of a source offers your readers the same level of detail provided in the original source. Therefore, while a summary will be shorter than the original source material, a paraphrase will generally be about the same length as the original source material.

When you use any part of a source in your paper—as background information, as evidence, as a counterargument to which you plan to respond, or in any other form—you will always need to decide whether to quote directly from the source or to paraphrase it. Unless you have a good reason to quote directly from the source, you should paraphrase the source. Any time you paraphrase an author's words and ideas in your paper, you should make it clear to your reader why you are presenting this particular material from a source at this point in your paper. You should also make sure you have represented the author accurately, that you have used your own words consistently, and that you have cited the source.

Example

This paraphrase below restates one of Milgram's points in the author's own words. When you paraphrase, you should always cite the source. This paraphrase uses the APA in-text citation style. Every source you paraphrase should also be included in your list of references at the end of your paper. For citation format information go to the [Citing Sources](#) section of this guide.

Source material

The problem of obedience is not wholly psychological. The form and shape of society and the way it is developing have much to do with it. There was a time, perhaps, when people were able to give a fully human response to any situation because they were fully absorbed in it as human beings. But as soon as there was a division of labor things changed.

--Stanley Milgram, "The Perils of Obedience," p.737.

Milgram, S. (1974). The perils of obedience. In L.G. Kirszner & S.R. Mandell (Eds.),

The Blair reader (pp.725-737). Prentice Hall.

Paraphrase

Milgram (1974) claims that people's willingness to obey authority figures cannot be explained by psychological factors alone. In an earlier era, people may have had the ability





to invest in social situations to a greater extent. However, as society has become increasingly structured by a division of labor, people have become more alienated from situations over which they do not have control (p.737).

When and how much to quote

The basic rule in all disciplines is that you should only quote directly from a text when it's important for your reader to see the actual language used by the author of the source. While paraphrase and summary are effective ways to introduce your reader to someone's ideas, quoting directly from a text allows you to introduce your reader to the way those ideas are expressed by showing such details as language, syntax, and cadence.

So, for example, it may be important for a reader to see a passage of text quoted directly from Tim O'Brien's *The Things They Carried* if you plan to analyze the language of that passage in order to support your thesis about the book. On the other hand, if you're writing a paper in which you're making a claim about the reading habits of American elementary school students or reviewing the current research on Wilson's disease, the information you're providing from sources will often be more important than the exact words. In those cases, you should paraphrase rather than quoting directly. Whether you quote from your source or paraphrase it, be sure to provide a citation for your source, using the correct format. (see [Citing Sources](#) section)

You should use quotations in the following situations:

- When you plan to discuss the actual language of a text.
- When you are discussing an author's position or theory, and you plan to discuss the wording of a core assertion or kernel of the argument in your paper.
- When you risk losing the essence of the author's ideas in the translation from their words to your own.
- When you want to appeal to the authority of the author and using their words will emphasize that authority.

Once you have decided to quote part of a text, you'll need to decide whether you are going to quote a long passage (a block quotation) or a short passage (a sentence or two within the text of your essay). Unless you are planning to do something substantive with a long quotation—to analyze the language in detail or otherwise break it down—you should not use block quotations in your essay. While long quotations will stretch your page limit, they don't add anything to your argument unless you also spend time discussing them in a way that illuminates a point you're making. Unless you are giving your readers something they need to appreciate your argument, you should use quotations sparingly.





When you quote from a source, you should make sure to cite the source either with an in-text citation or a note, depending on which citation style you are using. The passage below, drawn from O'Brien's *The Things They Carried*, uses an MLA-style citation.

Example

Source material

On the morning after Ted Lavender died, First Lieutenant Jimmy Cross crouched at the bottom of his foxhole and burned Martha's letters. Then he burned the two photographs. There was a steady rain falling, which made it difficult, but he used heat tabs and Sterno to build a small fire, screening it with his body holding the photographs over the tight blue flame with the tip of his fingers.

He realized it was only a gesture. Stupid, he thought. Sentimental, too, but mostly just stupid. (23)

O'Brien, Tim. *The Things They Carried*. New York: Broadway Books, 1990.

Quotation

Even as Jimmy Cross burns Martha's letters, he realizes that "it was only a gesture. Stupid, he thought. Sentimental too, but mostly just stupid" (23).

If you were writing a paper about O'Brien's *The Things They Carried* in which you analyzed Cross's decision to burn Martha's letters and stop thinking about her, you might want your reader to see the language O'Brien uses to illustrate Cross's inner conflict. If you were planning to analyze the passage in which O'Brien calls Cross's realization stupid, sentimental, and then stupid again, you would want your reader to see the original language.

The Nuts & Bolts of Integrating Sources

In order to make a clear, effective argument, you need to make sure to distinguish between your ideas and the ideas that come from your sources. A reader should always know when you are speaking and when your source is speaking. Once you've decided whether to paraphrase, summarize, or quote from a source, you should make sure your source material is clearly integrated into your paper.





Topic Sentences

When you are using sources in a paper, it's important to keep your readers focused on what you are saying about the sources rather than on the sources themselves. A useful way to keep your paper focused is to begin each paragraph of your paper with a topic sentence that sets up the point of that paragraph in your own words rather than beginning with a quotation or an idea from a source. Even when you are summarizing source material to provide background for your argument, you should make it clear what that summary is doing for your argument by introducing the paragraph with a sentence in your own voice.

Example

If you were summarizing part of Michael Sandel's article "The Case Against Perfection" for an essay about his argument, you could begin with a sentence like this to let your reader know why they need this summary:

In order to understand why genetic enhancement could actually have different effects than those Sandel suggests, it's important to first understand his main claims.

If you were analyzing Michael Sandel's argument and arguing that parts of it are not convincing, you might begin with a topic sentence like this:

Sandel's claim that widespread genetic enhancement would lead to a decrease in social solidarity is flawed because he does not acknowledge that society already lacks solidarity.

In both of these examples, the topic sentence helps the reader see what the author of the paper is doing with Sandel's arguments rather than simply summarizing those arguments.

Framing source material

Make sure that every time you use material from a source, you introduce it in your own words and follow it with your own analysis or discussion so that your readers understand what purpose the material is serving in your essay. You should always make it clear where your ideas end and the source's ideas begin. Your paper should never contain a paragraph that is solely based on a source without any commentary from you.

Every quotation you use in your paper should be introduced with a sentence of your own that alerts the reader to your reason for using the quotation. You should then follow the quotation with your own discussion so that your readers understand why you have quoted from the source and what you want them to take away from the quotation. Your paper should clearly focus on your argument, and your readers need to know how each source helps to develop that argument.





Example

In her Exposé essay about the composer Glenn Gould, Lucy Caplan creates clear boundaries between her own voice and the voices of her sources. In the following paragraph, she introduces the theories of two music critics, summarizing their debate in her own words and then following it with her own idea. Caplan's ideas are in bold; note that she begins and ends the paragraph with her own discussion of the sources rather than letting the source material take over the paragraph.

The question of how to interpret music of the past is a matter of perpetual controversy.¹ **Should performers play in a way that recreates the music as the composer would have heard it, or should they adjust to modern conventions?** One point of view, represented by longtime New Yorker music critic Andrew Porter, advocates what is known as performance practice, a style based on the premise that the most valuable performances aim to recreate, as exactly as possible, the sounds the composer would have heard (160).² According to this theory, musicians should follow a composer's textual directions about tempo, dynamics and other details of performance; in this sense, performance practice aims for what may be called "historical fidelity," in which an ideal musical performance attempts to recreate, as authentically as possible, the very sounds a composer intended. But other critics, such as musicologist Richard Taruskin, counter that "authentic" performances do not necessarily have any greater aesthetic value (74).³ Since musical performance necessarily involves a degree of interpretation on the part of the musician, he argues, performers should be able to interpret music freely, without feeling bound to strict conventions. **The debate between these two points of view remains unresolved; indeed, it has only intensified as the music at the center of the debate moves further into the past. The debate over historical fidelity, in other words, becomes more difficult to resolve as modern musical traditions become less similar to its historical predecessors.**⁴

Caplan does the following to frame her source material:

- Caplan's topic sentence sets up the debate that she is going to discuss.
- In the third sentence, Caplan summarizes Andrew Porter's point of view and cites her source.
- Caplan begins her summary of Richard Taruskin's point of view in the fifth sentence of the paragraph. She cites her source at the end of the sentence.
- In the final two sentences of the paragraph, Caplan makes it clear that she is moving beyond her sources to state her own idea.

Later in her essay, Caplan quotes both Porter and Taruskin. Each time she quotes from one of these sources, she integrates the quotation into a sentence of her own so that her readers will know who is speaking and also what the quotation adds to her argument. If Caplan had simply





reproduced the quotations without constructing her own sentences, her readers wouldn't know why she was sharing the quotations with them.

In the example below, Caplan embeds the quotation from Porter in a sentence that clearly contrasts Porter's view with Taruskin's view. In the next sentences, she expands her discussion of Taruskin's views. She finishes the paragraph by explaining what these quotations illustrate about the performance practice debate.

Whereas Porter claimed in his New Yorker review that “Beethoven’s music rang out...more beautifully...on the early instruments,” Taruskin suggests that performance practice may yield musicians who passively rather than actively read musical compositions. In a passive interpretation, he writes, “the notes and rests are presented with complete accuracy and an equally complete neutrality” (72). Early music, in this context, can become “a positivistic purgatory, literalistic and dehumanizing, a thing of taboos and shalt-nots” (Taruskin 76). These terms may be extreme, but they do give an idea of the intensity of the performance practice debate; Taruskin’s concerns were shared to some extent by many critics of performance practice.

Signal Phrases

A signal phrase is an introductory clause that signals to the reader a shift in point of view from you to your source. The appropriate use of signal phrases varies from discipline to discipline. Writers in the humanities often signal a quotation or paraphrase with the author's name (as in "Chen argues..." or "Cole notes..."). The choice of verb in a signal phrase can give your readers information about the disposition of the source. For example, the phrase "Sandel argues" signals that Sandel is making a claim, while the phrase "Sandel notes" signals a more neutral reporting of information.

Social scientists may use signal phrases more sparingly, introducing the names of authors or researchers when they want to place particular emphasis on the credibility of the source or to draw attention to the importance of the source author. Pay close attention to how the authors you read in your courses use signal phrases; these models will provide you with clues about the conventions of a particular discipline. When in doubt, ask your instructor whether you should name authors in the body of your paper rather than leaving that information for your citations.





Here are some examples of signal phrases you might use:

Allen *argues*

Sandel *notes*

Lewis *confirms*

Gates *emphasizes*

Wilson *contends*

Patterson *acknowledges*

Mukherjee *observes*

Carpio *suggests*

Banaji *claims*

Example

In her [essay about alienation among McDonald's workers](#), Joanna Li quotes from and paraphrases a book by Robin Leidner. In the selection below, Li uses signal phrases to indicate when she is paraphrasing from and quoting from Leidner's book.

Quick, standard exchanges, **Leidner reveals**, had the added benefit of protecting workers from intrusive or uncomfortable personal conversations (146). Given the long lines and customer expectation for speedy service, highly personalized conversations were often desired by neither party and workers preferred customers who were "ready to give their order" (Leidner 143). As **Leidner notes**, McDonald's management valued a friendly atmosphere but emphasized speed as their first priority; routines helped workers who "prided themselves on their speedy service" (143) to stay efficient and professional.

By saying "Leidner reveals," Li signals that the idea that follows is Leidner's idea. The second signal phrase, "Leidner notes," signals to the reader that the idea and the quotation in this sentence are Leidner's ideas.

Quoting and Grammatical Sentences

When you introduce a quotation with a signal phrase, that quotation becomes part of your own sentence. It's important, then, to make sure that the sentence is grammatically correct. If you are having trouble molding the grammar of the quotation to the grammar of your paper, you can use





brackets to help you. In the following sentence from Peter Bozzo's Exposé essay about the documentary film *Paradise Lost: The Child Murders at Robin Hood Hills*, Bozzo adds brackets to make the quotation fit grammatically into his own sentence.

Example

The filmmakers highlight Echols's vanity by suggesting that it consumed him even when issues of his guilt or innocence and life or death were at stake; in actuality, however, his actions may have represented a typical response to correct for what Echols refers to in the second film as a "haircut [that] was actually given to me about five minutes before the hearing by a woman in the back room with a pair of plastic scissors."

In the original quotation, Echols says "a haircut was actually given to me about five minutes before the hearing..." In order to make his sentence read smoothly, Bozzo has added the "that" in brackets to fit the grammar of his sentence.

Be careful not to overuse brackets in your paper. If you find yourself needing to change most words in a quotation to bracketed substitutes, you should reconsider either the quotation or your own sentence.

Ellipses

If you're quoting from a long passage and you don't want to use the whole passage, you can omit parts of it by using the ellipsis mark. The ellipsis is three periods, with spaces between them, and indicates to your reader that words have been omitted. Remember that you are obligated to represent a quotation accurately and that you should only omit words if those words do not change the meaning of the quotation. You don't need to use the ellipsis at the beginning or the end of a quotation since it will be clear to your reader that you have not quoted the entire source.

Example

Le Coney and Trodd explain that

the frontier loomed large as early as 1960, when John F. Kennedy's Democratic Party Nomination acceptance speech observed: "From the lands that stretch 3000 miles behind me, the pioneers of old gave up their safety, their comfort and sometimes their lives to build a new world here in the West . . . But the problems are not all solved and the battles are not all won, and we stand today on the edge of a new frontier."

Be careful not to allow your use of ellipses to alter the meaning of a passage. If you omit too much from a quotation you risk misrepresenting the original source.





Block Quotations

Block quotations should be used when the quotation you have chosen to include is too long to go into the body of your paragraph. When you use a block quotation in MLA, APA, or Chicago style, you should introduce the quotation with a sentence of your own that sets up the context for the quotation. You should also follow a block quotation with a sentence or more of your own that explains what you want your reader to understand about the quotation. You do not need to put quotation marks around the block quotation because the indentation shows readers that this is a quotation.

MLA Block Quotations

If you are using the MLA citation style you should use block quotations for any quotation that is more than four typed lines of prose or three lines of poetry. In the MLA style, block quotations should either be introduced with a sentence that ends with a colon or with punctuation that allows you to connect the quotation with the rest of your sentence. The quotation should be indented one inch from the left margin. You do not need to use quotation marks around the quotation. The citation (name and/or page number if this information does not appear in the body of the paper) comes after the final punctuation in the quotation. No additional punctuation follows.

Examples

Block quotation introduced by a sentence ending with a colon

The author investigated the different tours that Harvard students offer visitors and described her experience with Crimson Key in an article for Harvard Magazine:

At no point in our official travels did anyone scream, which I suppose I should have expected. Crimson Key focuses, above all, on accuracy. The training handbook for the guides clarifies confusing details and corrects popular myths. For instance, one rule states, “The Polaroid Story is FALSE” (referring to the belief that the Science Center was designed to look like a Polaroid camera). “We have been explicitly asked not to tell this story. DO NOT MENTION IT.” (Lasky)

Block quotation introduced by sentence that continues into the quotation

The author pulls the curtain back on the official Harvard tour, explaining that

At no point in our official travels did anyone scream, which I suppose I should have expected. Crimson Key focuses, above all, on accuracy. The





training handbook for the guides clarifies confusing details and corrects popular myths. For instance, one rule states, “The Polaroid Story is FALSE” (referring to the belief that the Science Center was designed to look like a Polaroid camera). “We have been explicitly asked not to tell this story. DO NOT MENTION IT.” (Lasky)

APA Block Quotations

If you are using the APA citation style, you should use block quotations for any quotation that is 40 or more words, and you should indent the passage one-half inch from the left margin. Citations should come after the final punctuation of the quotation, and you should not include any punctuation after the citation.

Block quotation introduced by a sentence ending with a colon

Margaret Klein Salamon describes an alternative to panic as a response to the climate emergency:

But aside from panic, individuals and groups can also respond to emergencies with reason, focus, dedication, and shocking success. Emergency mode is the mode of human psychological functioning that occurs when individuals or groups respond optimally to existential or moral emergencies. This mode of human functioning — markedly different from “normal” functioning — is characterized by an extreme focus of attention and resources on working productively to solve the emergency. (2017)

Block quotation introduced by sentence that continues into the quotation

Margaret Klein Salamon explains that

aside from panic, individuals and groups can also respond to emergencies with reason, focus, dedication, and shocking success. Emergency mode is the mode of human psychological functioning that occurs when individuals or groups respond optimally to existential or moral emergencies. This mode of human functioning — markedly different from “normal” functioning — is characterized by an extreme focus of attention and resources on working productively to solve the emergency. (2017)





Chicago Block Quotations

If you are using the [Chicago citation style](#), you can decide whether to set off your block quotations or to run them into the body of your essay. If you do use block quotations in Chicago style, indent the quoted passage one-half inch from the left margin.

Don't float the quotation! Follow quotation with your analysis of the quotation.

When you quote from any source, you should always be showing your readers how you are using the quotation in your paper by introducing it with your own sentence and following it with your own discussion. Here's an example:

In her Expos essay about composer Glenn Gould, Lucy Caplan uses a block quotation from an article by music critic Andrew Porter. Caplan introduces her block quotation with a sentence of her own that provides the context for the quotation. This sentence ends with a colon.

Andrew Porter, in a 1986 New Yorker concert review, compared two performances of a Beethoven cello sonata, one of which took place on period instruments and one on modern instruments:

Polite discussion followed [the performances], but it was apparent to anyone with ears that Beethoven's music rang out more bravely, more beautifully, and in better balance on the early instruments. In that direct comparison, the modernized cello sounded chocolate-coated and the little Yamaha piano loud and coarse. (142)

Caplan follows the block quotation with an entire paragraph of analysis in which she makes it clear to her readers how Porter's words add to her argument.

According to Porter, "anyone with ears" could hear the values of performance practice. In this sense, the standards of performance practice were important not only for their historical significance, but for their aesthetic value as well. Whether such standards were achieved with the use of early instruments or through strict interpretation, Porter seems clear: historically faithful performance sounded superior to the "loud and coarse" version offered by modern instruments. Performances on early instruments had more aesthetic value – they simply sounded better. For advocates of performance practice, then, period instruments were themselves essential in producing authentic interpretations of music.





Single vs. Double Quotation Marks

For MLA, APA, and Chicago, you should use double quotation marks when you quote material from a source. If you are also quoting passages from that source that were quoted in the original source, use single quotation marks to indicate that the original source contained the quotation.

If you are using a block quote, then you should use double quotation marks around the quoted material and no quotation marks around the block quote.

Example

In her review of Joan Didion’s book *Let Me Tell You What I Mean*, Maia Silber quotes several passages from Didion’s book. If you were quoting from Silber’s review and you included those passages, you would need to indicate that the quoted language comes from Didion’s book rather than from Silber. In that case, you would use single quotation marks to indicate the quoted material:

Silber writes that “Didion begins in her familiarly sardonic tone, observing that ‘the wives had pretty dresses, and everyone liked Las Vegas.’”

Punctuating Quotations

In the system of punctuation used in the United States, periods and commas go inside quotation marks except when you use in-text citations. In those cases, periods and commas go outside the quotation marks after the parenthetical citation.

Example

Punctuation inside the quotation marks

In his review of the performance, Owen Torrey described the moment that the musician “leaned back as the noise towered above, the crowd moving behind him in a moment of pure sound.”¹

¹Owen Torrey, “Alex G Kept the Mystery Alive in Toronto,” *Exclaim!*, November 6, 2022, https://exclaim.ca/music/article/alex_g_concert_review_toronto_history.

Because this sentence contains a footnote rather than an in-text citation, the period goes inside the quotation marks.





Punctuation outside the quotation marks

Batkin argues that “what is needed to shore up essential protections for low-income people is a principle behind wealth-based equal process” (2021, p.1553).

Because this sentence includes an in-text citation, the period goes outside the quotation marks.

Exclamation points and question marks go inside the quotation marks when they are part of the quotation, and outside when they are part of your own sentence that contains the quotation.

With in-text citations, the question mark or exclamation point goes inside the quotation if it is part of that quotation, and a period follows the parenthetical citation.

Example:

Inside

In an interview, Peter Singer expressed concern about whether he should have spent so much time writing about his family history, saying, “And I still have that feeling a little bit. Which of my works have done the most good?” (Gross).

Outside

But what are we to make of Harding's admonition to "write while you can no matter the sacrifice"?¹

Colons and semicolons go outside quotation marks unless they are part of the quotation

Example

Sandel argues that “the problem is not the drift to mechanism but the drive to mastery”; in other words, he is more concerned about the implications of trying to control nature.

Because the semi-colon was introduced by the author of the sentence and not by Sandel, it appears outside of the quotation marks.

Using *Sic*

Use the Latin word *sic* to indicate that a grammatical or spelling error appears in the source that you are quoting and is not your error. *Sic* should be enclosed in brackets within the quotation. APA style and Chicago style require *sic* to be italicized; MLA style does not.





Example:

In his letter to the editor, Harding admonishes his audience to "rite [sic] while you can, no matter the sacrifice" (23).

