The Catholic University of America
Writing Center Handout

Quoting

What is a quote?

A quote is an exact duplicate of a source. Generally, quotations should only constitute a **small** portion of the original document. **They should also not be the majority of your own paper.** They correspond word for word with the source document and <u>the original author must be given credit with a full and proper citation</u>.

How do I cite a quote?

That depends on what style guide you have been asked to use and/or what discipline you are writing for. *English* classes use **Modern Language Association format (called MLA)**, but many *social sciences*—including *Education* and *Psychology*—use the format created by the **American Psychological Association (APA)**. **Both of those use in-text, parenthetical citations of quotes**. If you are expected to use *footnotes*, you will need to consult the **Chicago Manual of Style or Kate Turabian's modification of it** for student papers, **depending again on the department, course, and professor.**

The Writing Center has handouts on all of these and links to very helpful online resources on our website:

https://english.catholic.edu/writing-center/index.html

When do I quote?

Generally, you quote in these situations:

1. When the wording of the source is very memorable or vivid or expresses a point *so well* that you cannot improve it without destroying the meaning.

2. When the words of reliable and respected authorities would lend support to your position.

3. When you wish to highlight the author's opinions.

4. When you wish to cite an author whose opinions challenge or vary greatly from those of other experts.

5. When you are going to discuss the source's choice of words.

Remember, you don't use a quote to *make* your point. You use a quote to *prove* your point. Quotes should be used selectively to support your argument.

How do I integrate quotes in my paper?

To avoid monotonous sentence structure, experiment with different methods of integrating source material. **Vary the verbs you use for attribution, but make sure they are used correctly.**

Example: The author *acknowledges, suggests, observes, warns, admits, speculates, predicts, explains, finds, or concludes*.

Quotes that aren't integrated properly are called **"dropped quotes," __because they look like they are just dropped into the middle of your paper.__ **Dropped quotes are usually whole sentences that have been quoted to make an argument, __rather than provide evidence.__ They are to be avoided because they ruin the flow of your essay. __Always attach quotations to some of your own language.__**

Example of a dropped quote: Martin Luther King, Jr.'s *Letter from a Birmingham Jail* uses ethos, logos, and **pathos. "King's** letter represents the most eloquent use of classical rhetoric in the twentieth century" (Young 123). Ethos is the most important aspect of King's work.

Example of a properly integrated quote: Martin Luther King, Jr.'s, *Letter from a Birmingham Jail*__, which "represents the most eloquent use of classical rhetoric in the twentieth century," uses__ ethos, logos, and pathos (Young 123). Ethos is the most important aspect of King's work.

What if my source has a spelling or other error?

If the source has an error, copy it and add the notation [sic] in brackets immediately after the error to indicate that it is not your error but your source's. You should not correct this error, but you need to make clear that it isn't your typo—just one you are transcribing in a quote.

Example: When Susan Young discusses the rhetorical style of Martin Luther King Jr.'s *Letter from a Birmingham Jail*, she explains that "King carefully constructed his own ethos by referencing **[sic]** Biblical passages as well as his own position in the community" (124).

What if I only want to use part of a long quote?

If you want to use parts of a long quote to make your point, use an ellipsis three periods with a space between each (. . .) in place of the missing words.

Example: In this instance, Nelmes speaks of the **"need for eloquent . . . musicians to play punk music" (48).**

For further information, please use the following link via Purdue OWL:

https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/using_research/quoting_paraphrasing_and_summarizing/index.html