

Quoting conversation

When you write down a conversation, you normally begin a new paragraph for each speaker.

Quotation marks enclose the words spoken:

- ▶ 'You're sure of this?' I asked.
- ▶ He nodded grimly.
- ▶ 'I'm certain.'

Verbs used to indicate direct speech, for example *he said*, *she complained*, are separated by commas from the words spoken, unless a question mark or an exclamation mark is used:

- ▶ 'That's all I know,' said Nick.
- ▶ Nick said, 'That's all I know.'
- ▶ 'Why?' asked Nick.

When *he said* or *said Nick* follows the words spoken, the comma is placed inside the quotation marks, as in the first example above. If, however, the writer puts the words *said Nick* within the actual words Nick speaks, the comma is outside the quotation marks:

- ▶ 'That', said Nick, 'is all I know.'

Double quotation marks are used to indicate direct speech being quoted by somebody else within direct speech:

- ▶ 'But you said you loved me! "I'll never leave you, Sue, as long as I live." That's what you said, isn't it?'

Numbers

Writing and saying numbers

Numbers over 20

- are written with a hyphen:
35 *thirty-five*
67 *sixty-seven*
- When writing a cheque we often use words for the pounds or dollars and figures for the pence or cents:
£22.45 *twenty-two pounds (and) 45 pence*
\$79.30 *seventy-nine dollars (and) ³⁰/₁₀₀*

Numbers over 100

- 329 *three hundred and twenty nine*
- The **and** is pronounced /n/ and the stress is on the final number.
- In American English the **and** is sometimes left out.

Numbers over 1000

- 1100 *one thousand one hundred (also informal) eleven hundred*
- 2500 *two thousand five hundred (also informal, especially in NAmE) twenty-five hundred*
- These informal forms are most common for whole hundreds between 1100 and 1900.
- A comma or (in BrE) a space is often used to divide large numbers into groups of 3 figures:
 - ▶ 33,423 or 33 423 (*thirty three thousand four hundred and twenty three*)
 - ▶ 2,768,941 or 2 768 941 (*two million seven hundred and sixty-eight thousand nine hundred and forty-one*)

A or one?

- 130 *a/one hundred and thirty*
- 1000000 *a/one million*
- **one** is more formal and more precise and can be used for emphasis:
 - ▶ *The total cost was one hundred and sixty three pounds exactly.*
 - ▶ *It cost about a hundred and fifty quid.*
- **a** can only be used at the beginning of a number:
 - 1000 *a/one thousand*
 - 2100 *two thousand one hundred two thousand a hundred*
- **a** is not usually used between 1100 and 1999:
 - 1099 *a/one thousand and ninety-nine*
 - 1100 *one thousand one hundred*
 - 1340 *one thousand three hundred and forty a thousand three hundred and forty*

Ordinal numbers

1st	<i>first</i>	5th	<i>fifth</i>
2nd	<i>second</i>	9th	<i>ninth</i>
3rd	<i>third</i>	12th	<i>twelfth</i>
4th	<i>fourth</i>	21st	<i>twenty-first</i>
			<i>etc.</i>

Fractions

$\frac{1}{2}$	<i>a/one half</i>
$\frac{1}{3}$	<i>a/one third</i>
$\frac{1}{4}$	<i>a/one quarter (NAmE also a/one fourth)</i>
(for emphasis use one instead of a)	
$\frac{1}{12}$	<i>one twelfth</i>
$\frac{1}{16}$	<i>one sixteenth</i>
$\frac{2}{3}$	<i>two thirds</i>
$\frac{3}{4}$	<i>three quarters (NAmE also three fourths)</i>
$\frac{9}{10}$	<i>nine tenths</i>

More complex fractions

- use **over**:
 - $\frac{19}{56}$ *nineteen over fifty-six*
 - $\frac{31}{144}$ *thirty-one over one four four*

Whole numbers and fractions

- link with **and**:
 - $2\frac{1}{2}$ *two and a half*
 - $5\frac{2}{3}$ *five and two thirds*
- **one** plus a fraction is followed by a plural noun:
 - $1\frac{1}{2}$ pts *one and a half pints*

Fractions/percentages and noun phrases

- use of:
 - ▶ *a fifth of the women questioned*
 - ▶ *three quarters of the population*
 - ▶ *75% of the population*
- with **half** do not use **a**, and **of** can sometimes be omitted:
 - ▶ *Half (of) the work is already finished.*
- do not use **of** in expressions of measurement or quantity:
 - ▶ *How much is half a pint of milk?*
 - ▶ *It takes me half an hour by bus.*
- use **of** before pronouns:
 - ▶ *We can't start – only half of us are here.*

Fractions/percentages and verbs

- If a fraction/percentage is used with an uncountable or a singular noun the verb is generally singular:
 - ▶ *Fifty per cent of the land is cultivated.*
 - ▶ *Half (of) the land is cultivated.*