

Punctuating Dialogue Rules

1. Indent for each new speaker. (New speaker = New paragraph)
2. Only the exact words of the speaker go inside quotation marks.
3. The words used to identify the speaker are called the **tag line** (e.g., Mary said or Jane replied).
Words like said, replied, screamed, etc. are never capitalized in a tag line.
4. There are **three** types of tag lines
 1. Before the quote: the comma always follows the tag line and the beginning letter of the quote is always capitalized (e.g., Jon asked, “Where did everyone go?”).
 2. After the quote: the ending punctuation after the actual quote(before the tag line) can never be a period (e.g., “Every one decided to go,” said Jon.). If the sentence would normally end with a period, substitute a comma. An exception to this rule is end marks for questions or exclamations (e.g., “Where did everyone go?” asked Jon).
 3. In the Middle of the quote:
 - a) In between two separate sentences (quotes): a period follows the tag line and the beginning of the second sentence (quote) is capitalized (e.g., “I have a dog,” said Jane. “Do you have any pets?”).
 - b) When the tag line splits one sentence (quote) into two parts: a comma follows the first part of the quote and the tag line (e.g., “I have two dogs,” said Jane, “that fight all the time.”).