



Direct and indirect speech punctuation

Direct speech is where the text quotes exactly what someone has said. It needs quotation marks (sometimes referred to as inverted commas or speech marks) around the exact words.

“Would you like to go sailing today?” asked Ainslie.

At the end of what someone has said there is always punctuation: a question mark, exclamation mark, comma or full stop. These go inside the quotation marks.

There are times when the punctuation will go outside the quotation marks. This is when it is not part of the quote.

The writer described the building as “dank”, “dark” and “musty”.

The comma and full stop are outside the quotation marks as they are normal punctuation for the sentence and not part of the quote.

She said: “Would you like to go sailing today?”.

The full stop is outside the quotation marks because it indicates the end of the sentence. The question mark stays inside the quotation marks because it is part of the speech.

Indirect speech does not require quotation marks.

She told me she was planning to go on a holiday.

I was told by my boss that I had a promotion.

He said he was not going to the movies.