

Parentheses

Parenthesis vs Parentheses

- **Parenthesis** with an i is singular, referring to one curved line: (.
- **Parentheses** with an e is plural, referring to both curved lines or more: ().

Parentheses

- Parentheses () are used to indicate supplementary information to clarify, explain, or add context in a sentence. Parentheses are used when creating a list of numbers and letters, emphasizing content, creating narrative citations, referring to tables, including additional information, etc.

Things to consider

- If you remove the text in parentheses, the sentence should still be complete and correct.
- Use commas after parentheses, not before.
- Unless the parentheses contain a complete sentence, punctuation should go outside of the parentheses, and the first word should not be capitalized.

Should the punctuation mark be placed inside or outside of the parentheses?

- **Outside** - when the supplemental information is part of the original sentence.
 - Example 1: Every year, students enjoy the teaching style that Dr. Brown brings to his English course. (He was nominated for the Academic Excellence in Teaching award.)
 - Example 2: Our daughter has light brown eyes (they are round and soulful) and wavy hair.
- **Inside** - when the supplemental information is not part of the original sentence and forms its own sentence.
 - Example 1: Punctuating parentheses is easy (if you know where to put the period).
 - Example 2: Our son has light brown eyes (just like my wife).

APA & MLA Citations

- The period comes after the parenthesis in both APA and MLA format. The exception to this rule is with block quotes. When using block quotes, in both APA and MLA format, the period comes before the in-text citation.
- **Examples for in-text citations:**
 - APA (Jones, 2011, p.131).
 - MLA (Jones 131).



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Examples of Parentheses

Add extra information

- **Example 1:** Marilyn Monroe (born Norma Jeane Mortenson) was as iconic as her life was tragic.
- **Example 2:** Amelia Earhart (1897-1937) was a famous aviatrix in the 20th century.

Create a narrative citation

- **Example 1:** Cooper (1993) attempted to disprove evolution in her article, "Ain't No Ape."
- **Example 2:** Hussain and Thomas (2020) insisted that "those involved in the power plant should consider its effects on the environment" (p. 235).

Define acronyms

- **Example 1:** There was political pushback during the initial proposal of NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement).
- **Example 2:** Douglas (1988) was a strong believer in the personal learning community (PLC).

Identify items in a list or series

- **Example 1:** They asked me several questions in the interview: (1) What are my future goals? (2) What are my greatest strengths? (3) Where do I see myself in ten years?
- **Example 2:** The University of Arendal offers courses in (a) English, (b) biology, (c) theater, and (d) baking.

Add personal commentary

- **Example 1:** The newly elected CEO said that things will be different this time. (Isn't that what they all say?)
- **Example 2:** We saw a small, red bird (a cardinal?) in the tree.

Refer to tables or lists

- **Example 1:** Darren Foods sells twice as many gluten-free products as their competitors (see Table 3).

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References

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