

Academic Writing Tip #10

The Ellipsis Mark

The ellipsis mark consists of three spaced periods. Use these to indicate that material has been deleted from a word-for-word quotation. Ellipsis is important in alerting the reader that some information from the original quote is being omitted.

EX: According to the study, “Fewer than 60% of the population ... votes in national elections.”

Here are some additional rules for the ellipsis mark:

- Use a period before the three ellipsis dots if you delete a full sentence or more from a quoted passage. In this case, use **four dots**.

EX: The researcher claimed, “The results of this latest experiment are comparable to any great discovery These results are being accepted without any scrutiny.”

- Use ellipsis to indicate that an enumeration or listing continues beyond the items named. (**This applies to informal writing only**)

EX: The new drug would help in the fight against all types of cancers: lung, colon, prostate ...

- Use the ellipsis mark at the end of a quotation only when the omission in the quote coincides with the end of the original sentence.

EX: The researcher reported that the results were “competitive with other results from renowned researchers”

- Leave one blank space before and after the ellipsis mark.
- Do not use the ellipsis mark at the beginning of a quotation.
- Do not use an ellipsis if it changes the original meaning of a quoted passage.

EX: Original “The film was an extraordinary piece of trash, totally beyond belief.”

EX: Ellipsis “The film was... extraordinary ... totally beyond belief.”

