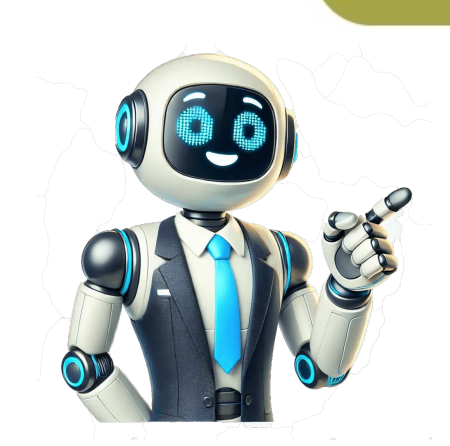


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[] Brackets, known by that term in the US and as square brackets in the UK, come in pairs and enclose a stretch of text. Generally, they are used to indicate added text that explains or comments on something in a sentence. [] Brackets / Square BracketsWhat are brackets?The punctuation marks [], as opposed to parentheses (), show that something has been added to or omitted from a quotation or cited sentenceThe material within the brackets is often an explanation or a comment on something in the original quotation.When to use bracketsThey may be used when a writer wants to explain or comment on something in a quotation.Examples:Willie Mays [inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame in 1979] began his professional career in 1947.The history of all hitherto existing society [by this Marx meant written history] is the history of class struggle.The Toyota RAV4 [see our full review in the May issue] continues its run as a popular small SUV.A meal at that restaurant will cost you \$100 [90 euros].This year, we plan to expand the zoo [with new animal displays], the director said.The Beijing Metro [don't try to board at rush hour unless you like being squashed!] is one of the worlds busiest transportation systems,Jean-Luc Godard [still active although he is almost 90 years old] was a key figure in the French cinematic movement known as the New Wave.Teresa Teng [traditional Chinese:] was among the most popular singers ever to have emerged from the Chinese-speaking world.The ellipsis in bracketsuse an ellipsis (UK: ellipsis points) to show that words have been omitted from a quotation.Examples:If you visit Berlin, you'll probably want to visit the Tiergarten, a public park containing a zoo [], public gardens, and recreation areas.Mozarts compositions include 41 symphonies, more than a dozen operas [], and numerous pieces of chamber music and keyboard music.You can use these marks around a single letter to modify a word in a quotation so that it will fit into a new sentence. Often this is done to remove a capital letter from a quoted sentence within another sentence.Ho Chi Minh famously said that [it] was patriotism, not communism, that inspired me.When youre having hard times, remember Winston Churchill saying that [if] youre going through hell, keep going.This usage is restricted to formal writing, where exact reproduction of a quotation is important. In informal writing, you can simply use the lowercase letter [sic].The expression sic (Latin for just as) is often used in brackets to show that an error in a quotation appears in the original text, but that later words were discarded and had their tops turned into musical instruments.Brackets / Squire Brackets InfographicLearn more with useful punctuation rules on how to use parentheses and quotation marks in English with examples and infographics. Use square brackets to enclose text added to a quote by someone other than the original speaker or writer. This could be an editorial correction, clarification, or other explanation. Examples He insisted that it [the decision] was fair. She describes making peace with her past. Good and bad [memories] make us who we are. Place the Latin word sic (traditionally italicized) within brackets to indicate that quoted text has been reproduced exactly, including any errors or unexpected turns of phrase. Example An occasional feature, The Den of Villany [sic], was a forum for Douglass to comment on discrimination in American society. Enclose in brackets any parenthetical material that appears in text already within parentheses. Examples This disrupts communication and navigations patterns of marine animals (including dolphins and whales [Table 1]), causing a decline in local populations. The adverb sic is italicized and placed in square brackets. (Parentheses [round brackets] are used instead in some styles.) When to use square brackets in English Square brackets (or simply brackets) are punctuation marks used mainly to enclose additional text that is not originally part of the surrounding passage. This is information added later by someone other than the original speaker or writeraen explanation, editorial clarification, correction, or translation. Square brackets are also used when brackets are needed within parentheses. Examples He continued, I [the vaccine] have been clinically tested, and we [health officials] are confident it will save lives. The two cities [Nusquam and Pouthenal] will now be on the map. Patients can now [have their eyes checked] while they wait. She believes that people should not attempt to logicize [sic] religion. They reviewed safety features of boats, canoes, and rafts (as part of the overall investigation into portable floating devices [PFDs]) for this report. Some cats prefer laser to feather toys (see The Complete Guide to Cats [1991]). In this article, we discuss when to use square brackets and how to use them correctly. Comments and clarifications in quoted text When you quote someone, enclose in square brackets any comments, clarifications, interpolations, explanations, and other information added later and not in the original speech or text. Examples Various therapies can help patients better manage MS [multiple sclerosis]. He claims that he has found the ultimate cure [for sleep disorders], which is to live alone in a cave for three months. She [the CEO] will not be appearing in court. Dark matter, according to Dash, explains the expansion of the universe. [Other physicists suggest modifying the theory of general relativity.Ed.] It took all her resolution not to cry when she bade farewell to [her cat] Mike, who was curled up on the sun-warm grass at the back door (Lucy Maud Montgomery, Emily of New Moon, 1923). Such editorial interpolations can help clarify an unclear pronoun reference in quoted text. Examples She [the governor] will deliver an address to the Legislature later today on the matter. They [the students] were exploring the canyon without adult supervision. Dash clarifies her earlier statement: We [editors] have a duty to not change the intended meaning of a text. You may also simply replace an unclear pronoun. Enclose the replacement in square brackets to indicate it has been changed from the original. Example [The governor] will deliver an address to the Legislature later today on the matter. A replacement rather than an additional insertion can make for smoother reading, particularly in news copy and other writing meant for a general audience. Also enclose in square brackets a word inserted in quoted speech that was not in the original. Examples I mean such [solutions are] only temporary. What we need is a long-term cure. We have asked [the mayor] for clarification. If quoted text already contains brackets, write brackets in the original in the source reference to clarify that this is not an addition to the original text. Example It is important that she [the president] remain neutral (Minerva Dash, October 1999; brackets in the original). In a translation, square brackets may be used to enclose a term in the original language if you think this would be useful to readers. Example Sartre distinguishes between being in-itself [en-soi] and being for-itself [pour-soi]. Square brackets can also enclose any other information for clarification but [had not] expressed any. The Latin sic is used to indicate that a quotation has been exactly reproduced, including any spelling or grammatical errors in the original text. Sic comes from Latin and literally means so, loosely translated as intentionally so written. It signifies an intended reproduction of original text, errors and all. The term sic is traditionally italicized and enclosed in square brackets in formal writing. Examples In a tweet, the then president-elect called it an unpresidential [sic] act. Poco wrote back to say, The chip [sic] has sailed, which, despite her earlier tears, was a bit of a relief. The Governor said she could [sic] care less about gun violence. Using sic isnt always necessary. Pointing out someones grammatical errors can seem needlessly judgmental, and silent editing is becoming increasingly acceptable. You may simply correct a spelling mistake or grammatical error, or if necessary, replace the typo with the correct word in square brackets. Sic is necessary only if you must print quoted words exactly. NoteSic may also be enclosed in parentheses instead of square brackets, and generally is in news copy. In academic writing, sic usually appears in square brackets. Sic need not always indicate a grammatical error. It can simply signify an uncommon spelling, an unexpected turn of phrase, or an opinion that is unacceptable or unpopularthat someone has been quoted verbatim. Examples His latest venture is titled Carzzz [sic]. He remained committed, he said, adding, Wild lions [sic] couldnt drag me away. Use square brackets to enclose parenthetical material that appears in text already in parentheses (brackets within brackets). Examples Pollution affects pollinators (insects and birds that pollinate flowers [e.g., bees and butterflies]). In her debut novel (On Silence [1982]), Dash creates a word so unreal in its reality that it blurs the line between truth and disbelief. Sea levels rose to their highest in a century (based on data collected across 14 locations [Table 1]). Many cats enjoy being brushed (see The Complete Cat Manual [pp. 3734]). CautionDont use square brackets if the text inside parentheses can be set off using commas instead. Commas are less intrusive than brackets. Example Poor: Pollution affects pollinators (insects that pollinate flowers [like bees and butterflies]). Better: Pollution affects pollinators (insects that pollinate flowers, like bees and butterflies). Many citation styles call for the use of square brackets (e.g., to cite an authors pseudonym, to provide an abbreviation, or with in-text citations). Here are some examples. Examples MLA (Works Cited). Asimov, Isaac (Paul French). The Complete Adventures of Lucky Starr. Doubleday, 1952. APA (Reference List). Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2022). Consumer expenditures, 2021 [Annual report]. APA (in-text). Cats like pizza (Association of Cat Lovers [ACLL], 1999). IEEE (in-text). Cats like pizza, as experimentally shown by Dash [1], [2]. Chicago (in-text). Cats prefer pasta (Femy R. [New York], June 3, 2021, reply to Dash 2021). Other punctuation marks like periods and question marks are used the same way with square brackets as they are with parentheses (round brackets). Punctuation goes inside brackets if it belongs to the bracketed material but outside if it is part of the surrounding text. Examples As postulated by Dash (The Complete Guide to Cats [1991?]), cats are adept at interdimensional travel. Cats, according to Dash, can travel through time. [Other researchers believe teleportation to be a more likely explanation for feline kinetics.Ed.] Feline interdimensional travel was first investigated by Minerva Dash (The More Complete Guide to Cats [1993]). Feline interdimensional travel was first investigated by Minerva Dash in 1993. (Further research was then conducted by Femy [1995]). Parentheses and brackets both enclose additional information. Parentheses are used mainly to set off explanatory material from surrounding text, whereas brackets enclose information added to quoted text by someone other than the original writer. Examples Parentheses for explanatory information: We need emergency supplies (blankets, medicines, food, water, etc.). Brackets for insertion in quoted text: These [supplies] are needed to keep people warm through the night. Brackets can also enclose parenthetical material, but only if it appears within text already enclosed in parentheses. Example Brackets within parentheses: They have asked for help (including emergency supplies [blankets, medicines, food, and water]). NoteRound brackets are called parentheses in U.S. English, with square brackets being referred to as brackets. In British English, the word brackets refers to round brackets, and square brackets are known as such. Here are some examples from published content that illustrate the use of square brackets. Examples To insert an editorial clarification I think the biggest thing they [super-deep diamonds] inform us about is the process of subduction, says Smith. Zaria Corvett, The Super-Deep Royal Diamonds Revealing Earths Secrets, BBC Future (September 23, 2022) He describes people who have come to reassess their basic values, so that they change jobs, travel the world or commit themselves to charity work. Theyve channelled [their distress] into something positive. The Complicated Truth of Post-Traumatic Growth, BBC Worklife (March 14, 2022) Pentagon spokesman Peter Cook later said in a statement: Through direct engagement with Chinese authorities, we have secured an understanding that the Chinese will return the UUV [unmanned underwater vehicle] to the United States. Donald Trump Accuses China of Unpresented Act over US Navy Drone, Guardian (December 18, 2016) To insert a comment in quoted text I knocked at your door but had no answer so gather youve taken my advice and are sleeping off last night.... Dont think any more about the dress. [This last was heavily underlined] Yours affectionately, Bee. [And a postscript] You must both come over and see us soon. Daphne du Maurier, Rebecca (1938) Sic to indicate an exact reproduction, including errors Blue... signifies vigilance [sic], perseverance [sic] & justice. In a citation Upon her return to Amherst, Dickinson confined herself to the Homestead, declaring, I do not cross my Fathers ground to any House or town (Letters 330 [L330], p. 460). Paul Crumbly, Emily Dickinsons Life (2000) To quietly correct grammar or spelling The making of the gooseberry jam and a good recipe for orange wine interests her more than all the marchings and countermarchings, the man[oeuvres and diplomacies, going on the world over. Brackets within parentheses The most predictive neural activity was associated with reward processing (ventral striatum [VS]) and the ability to simulate the minds of others (temporoparietal junction [TPJ] and dorsomedial prefrontal cortex [DMPFC]). Scott Barry Kaufman, The Neuroscience of Social Influence, Scientific American (July 9, 2013) The primary use of square brackets in English is to enclose an editorial comment, correction, or clarification, or any other change made to quoted text by someone other than the original speaker or writer Brackets are also used in source citations. Brackets are interchangeable with parentheses but can enclose parenthetical material that appears in text already within parentheses. Finally, any punctuation goes inside square brackets if it belongs to the bracketed material but outside if it belongs to the larger sentence. Of the four types of brackets found in English punctuation marks, the square bracket is amongst the most popular. Alongside the parentheses, the square bracket works to separate words within text for added detail and information.The difference between parenthesis and bracket use is important, as each separates different types of information. With plenty of examples, read on to see how to use a square bracket properly.Square brackets [], also called brackets, are punctuation marks used to alter or add information to quoted material. They are always used in pairs and help offset information from the rest of a sentence in order to add information or detail. This is similar to how you use parentheses (also called round brackets). However, square and round brackets cant be used interchangeably.Square brackets are almost exclusively used within quotation marks to help make a quotation clearer or easier to understand. They offset words that help clarify, emphasize, or correct a direct quotation.A parenthesis is a type of bracket also known as a round bracket. They are used to offset words in texts to add additional information and detail. The words found between parentheses are unnecessary for understanding the passage, whereas brackets are often needed for a reader to understand the quote.The two other types of brackets are angle brackets (also known as chevrons) and curly brackets (also known as braces or curly braces). There are some very specific rules to bracket use. These rules and examples provide the information you need to use correctly in your writing and help make quoted material understandable and relevant.Use brackets to clarify nouns and pronouns in a quote that are unclear.For ExampleHe clearly stated that there would be no merger with the [Solar farm] company due to their poor weed management practices that used highly toxic weed control that ruined the soil.Use brackets to translate a foreign word or phrase in a quote.For ExampleDespite taking four years of German in High School, she struggled with basic greetings when in the country, often replying [ich weis nicht [I dont know] when spoken to in the native dialect.Use brackets to indicate the change of the first letter of quoted material from uppercase to lowercase or vice versa.For ExampleIn 1913 her grandfather [arrived alone at the age of 12 in Ellis Island to reunite with his family who had traveled to the coal mines of New Mexico]Use brackets surrounding the Latin term sic, meaning thus or so, to indicate an error or unusual word usage in a quote. This indicates the original writer included the error.For ExampleOur local horse racing track held amateur jackpots each Thursday, Friday, and evry [sic] other Saturday morning.You can also use a correction of the original material, complete with a question mark if you are guessing at the correction.For ExampleThe history professor has traveled the world, including remote places like the Kergelen Islands [Kerguelen Islands?].Use brackets to indicate when you change a quote to emphasize a specific portion of the passage.For ExampleThe professor shared his concerns over how many students were apathetic to the learning process and were willing to throw away their tuition money when they skipped class [emphasis added].Use brackets to censor any inappropriate material found in the original text.For ExampleShe lost her cool with the group, telling them to sit [the expletive] down.Use brackets inside parentheses to replace parentheses inside parentheses.For ExampleWe traveled exclusively by car when the children were young (so we could stop [exposing them to more history] whenever we wanted).Brackets are occasionally used in referencing and footnote indication. Always be sure to check with the style guide you are using for the proper use and any applicable updates when using brackets in this manner.For example, in APA style guides you may see brackets used to indicate the following:Identifying the context of publication (such as a thesis or dissertation)Identifying a source (such as artwork, social media, or brochures)Indicating when a source does not have a page number (such as video, mobile app, or chat thread)Providing translations of titles from another languageThe use of a bracket in these scenarios allows the reader to know that the information provided does not appear in the actual work, but is accurate nonetheless.The less.Footnotes also appear after information as [1], [2], and [3] where appropriate to provide reference to the reader and find the actual citation of the material used. Always separate the numbers with brackets rather than include them in one long list when more than one is required.Brackets are an acceptable punctuation mark to use in both formal and informal use when quoting materials. And another: Perhaps somebody will take the hint and explain [the purpose of square brackets], (The Guardian)While on the topic of doubt, why oh why did anyone doubt MWDs assessment that Morry Schwartzs The [Boring] Saturday Paper is, well, boring? (The Australian)Square brackets, also called brackets, are one of four different types of brackets used to offset words in various texts. Square brackets are commonly used for quoted material to help define and bring clarification of direct quotations to readers. Be sure to refer to the rules associated with their use to help make your writing understandable and more concise.HomeWelcome to EFProgrammesSee everything we doOfficesFind an office near youAbout usWho we areCareersJoin the teamWhen you are writing and you want to add a little extra information in the middle of a sentence, you might put that information in parentheses.But what happens if you are quoting someone else? In that case, if you put the information in parentheses, it might look like these are the words of the person you are quoting.This is where brackets come in.They are commonly used in academic writing and sometimes in journalism.Well cover all the ways brackets are used below so that you'll know what they mean when you encounter them and you can use them with confidence yourself!When do you use square brackets?In academic writing, you use square brackets to indicate words are added or explained in some way in quoted text, to modify a quote for grammatical reasons, to show missing words with ellipses or to replace expletives. Using square brackets to add words to quoted textSometimes, you need to use a quote that will not be clear if you do not add words to it to better explain it.This often happens if you are just pulling out a sentence or a small section of a passage.The sentence or section makes sense within its full context, but when you pull the shorter quote out, it may be necessary to add explanatory words. For example, the full passage might be, I saw the book marks (the single one is called a parenthesis), also known as curved brackets, have plenty of uses in everyday written language. Their most common use, as Ive demonstrated already, is segregating subordinate material or asides. Usually, this is stuff that could be left out of the text or skipped over during reading without altering the flow or meaning of the surrounding sentence. You can do the same thing with commas, like I did in the last sentence and am doing now, but, if youve got a few commas in the sentence for other purposes, things can get a little out of hand, like they might be here.In cases where a writer is uncertain whether a subject(s) is singular or plural, or male or female, and (s)he wants to cover all the bases, parentheses denote that things could be one or the other.Parentheses also have a few uses in mathematics, and are used to denote sets of coordinates, set aside the arguments of functions and set precedence in the order of operations. You might remember the mnemonic device PEMDAS (or BODMAS or BEDMAS if youre from the UK or Canada) from math class: in a calculation, you do the stuff in parentheses first, then exponents, then multiplication and division, and finally addition and subtraction (left to right on those last four)! [Square brackets are primarily used to modify quoted text by someone who isnt the original author. These modifications might includeAdding clarification - He [the sheriff] shot them [the zombies] in the head.Adding missing information - The zombies had come into the city from two adjoining counties [Butler and Beaver].Adding missing words - Where [are] the zombies at?Adding editorial comment - If you are bitten by a zombie, do not try to hide it from your fellow survivors. [emphasis mine]Adding an ellipsis or the Latin word sic to indicate deleted material or that the text is quoted exactly as it appeared in the original source - Oh muh gawd [sic], the zombies are coming through the window [!Square brackets can also be used to nest subordinate text within subordinate text (this is done by putting square brackets [like these guys] inside parentheses).In mathematics, square brackets are used to denote floor and ceiling functions, commutators, matrices, intervals and other things that I dont understand.)Curly brackets, sometimes called squiggly brackets or braces, dont see much use in everyday writing, but do pop up in poetry (to join triplet lines), music (to mark grace notes), math (to list members of a set) and different programming languages (to enclose groups of statements). < > Chevrons, or angle brackets, are also largely confined to specialized use. In programming markup language, like html,tags and other statements. In comic books, graphic novels and video games, theyre sometimes placed around dialog to indicate that the character is speaking another language and youre reading the translation. On TV, they're sometimes placed around the names of sounds () to interpret sound effects in closed captions. In mathematical calculations theyre used to indicate that one number is less than or greater than another.In more common usage, especially in online conversation, theyre used to make text hearts (Angle Brackets or Chevrons Table of Contents The Different Types of Brackets in Writing "Parentheses" or "Brackets"? Parentheses (or "Round Brackets") Square Brackets (or "Box Brackets") Braces (or "Curly Brackets") Angle Brackets (or "Chevrons") The Different Types of Brackets in Mathematics The Different Types of Brackets in Programming Test Time! This infographic summarizes how the different types of brackets are used: Below is an explanation of how each type of bracket is used in writing, mathematics, and programming. These are round brackets (). In the US, round brackets are referred to as "parentheses." In writing, they are used: For example: You are required to attend the meeting in Plymouth on Tuesday. (Avoid the rush hour if I were you.) (Here, the text in the round brackets is afterthought.) Andrew Sissons (the author) lived in New York until the age of 16. (Here, the text in the round brackets is additional information.) For example: Remove the screw(s) as shown. (This could be one screw or more than one screw.) In the US, the term "parentheses" means round brackets. In the UK, "parentheses" means any type of parenthetical punctuation (e.g., brackets, commas, dashes). In the UK, "brackets" usually means round brackets. Read more on using round brackets. These are square brackets []. They are sometimes called "box brackets." They are used to make quoted text clearer by showing insertions by the current author. The text in the square brackets can clarify by adding an explanation or by replacing some the original text. For example: He said: "I know he [James] was last." (The text in the square brackets explains who "he" is.) She wrote: "It compliments [sic] your eyes." (The term "sic" [sic erat scriptum means "Thus it was written." It is used to highlight that the original author used "compliment" (instead of "complement".) For example: He said: "I know [James] was last." (This time, the text in the square brackets replaces "he," which was in the original.) Read more about using square brackets. These are braces { }. They are sometimes called "curly brackets." They are rarely used in writing, but they can be used to show list items or equal choices. For example: You will meet the family (Baron Smith-Jones, Baroness Smith-Jones, Master James, Master Simon). (The list in the braces is the entire list. It is not a sample. Do not use "e.g." or "i.e." with the list.) For example: Write your drink choice (coke, lemonade, coffee, tea, green tea, water) on the ticket. These are angle brackets . They are sometimes called "chevrons." Angle brackets are typically used in double pairs in the format > or . Angle brackets are not common in English writing, but they are common in other languages (such as Spanish and Russian), where they are used as quotation marks. Here are some uses of angle brackets in English (rare): For example: "Hello, Jonathan. How are you?" You look a mess, Jonathan. For example: Tourist: "Hello, friend. Where is Red Square please?" Policeman 1: What did he say? Policeman 2: I've no idea. (This practice is most common in comic strips.) For example: "Hello, Jonathan. How are you?" Offers a handshake but is rejected (Here, the text in the angle brackets shows an action. This practice is most common in film or play scripts.) Away from Keyboard (Here, the text in the angle brackets shows a status. Such messages are most common with online communications apps.) For example: PERSON is cordially invited to the TIME show on DATE. (Data fields like these are common with mail-merge tools.) In Mathematics, brackets are usually nested like this: When working through a calculation, do any calculations within the parentheses (), then the square brackets [], and then the braces { }. For example: StepWorking Here's the sum: [(4 (13-9)) 2] 10 Do the 0 to get: [(4 4) 2] 10 Do the [] to get: (16 2) 10 Do the { } to get 8 10 Here's the answer:80 In programming, brackets have specific uses. Here is a quick overview of how they are used in Javascript: TypeUse ()Parentheses are used after a word to show it is a function. Of note, variables are passed between functions by placing the variables inside the parentheses. The short program below, we call the function "showMyMessage" and pass it the string "Grammar Monster," which is then assigned to the variable a. This is then shown in an alert box by Javascript's built-in alert function. Note the use of parentheses with the functions. function showMyMessage(a){alert(a); } showMyMessage("Grammar Monster") []Square brackets are used for arrays. The short program below shows an alert box with the word "beef" and then one with the word "vegetables." var meal = ["beef","potatoes","vegetables"] alert (meal[0]); alert (meal[2]); { }Braces are most commonly used to show the scope of a function (i.e., where it starts and ends). The short program below shows alert boxes with the numbers 0 to 9. Note the use of braces for the functions. function countToTen({ for (i = 0; i < 10; i++){ alert(i); } }) // this brace marks the end of the "for" statement } // this brace marks the end of the "countToTen" function < >Angle brackets are not used as brackets in programming. They are used as "less than" and "greater than" signs. The short program below shows an alert box if the number sent to the function "checkMyNumber" is between 3 and 7. Note the > and < signs in the "if" statement. ("&&" means AND.) function checkMyNumber(a){ if (a > 2 && a < 8){alert("Yes, it's between 3 and 7.");} } Was something wrong with this page? Use #gm to find us quicker. Create a QR code for this, or any, page. XYoutubeFacebookmailing listgrammar forum

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