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It's National-Punctuation-Day!!! Don't overdo it.

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Friday - 9/24/2010, 10:12am ET
 Neal Augenstein, wtop.com

I'll be honest with you.

Use me sparingly. (Thinkstock Photo)

I couldn't tell you why brackets are preferable to parentheses in some sentences. I don't know if there's any difference between a phrase and a clause. And when my (better-educated) coworkers break down elements of speech I nod, but have no idea what they're talking about.

Yet, it always drove me crazy that The Go-Go's had an apostrophe in their name, even though I know it was to prevent people from calling them The Go-Gahz.

Today is [National Punctuation Day](#).

"The general rule of thumb is 'the least punctuation the better,'" says Paul D. Shinkman, writer and editor with WTOP.com, who will no doubt correct the punctuation of this sentence, since it involves a phrase inside a quotation. (Nope. Well done, Neal - PDS)

"Punctuation always goes inside quotation marks," Shinkman says.

As he edits the stories submitted by broadcast reporters who, like me, figured they would never need to become experts, or even proficient, in written English, what's his punctuation pet peeve?

"Possessive pronouns -- putting 'apostrophe "s"' or "'s' apostrophe' first. That one drives me crazy," Shinkman says. (Nice quotation within a quotation within a quotation - PDS)

With so many people communicating online through social networking, Shinkman sees people using multiple exclamation points, when in his judgement one is probably too many.

"Exclamation points make your sentence a joke," said Shinkman, paraphrasing F. Scott Fitzgerald.

"The content of the sentence should really speak for itself."

What's your punctuation pet peeve? Post a comment on the message board or on WTOP's [Facebook page](#).

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