

Prose and Poetry:

What's the Difference?

Here are some differences between Prose and Poetry.

Prose	Poetry
Most everyday writing is in prose form.	Poetry is typically reserved for expressing something special in an artistic way.
The language of prose is typically straightforward without much decoration.	The language of poetry tends to be more expressive or decorated, with comparisons, rhyme, and rhythm contributing to a different sound and feel.
Ideas are contained in sentences that are arranged into paragraphs.	Ideas are contained in lines that may or may not be sentences. Lines are arranged in stanzas.
There are no line breaks. Sentences run to the right margin.	Poetry uses line breaks for various reasons — to follow a formatted rhythm or to emphasize an idea. Lines can run extremely long or be as short as one word or letter.
The first word of each sentence is capitalized.	Traditionally, the first letter of every line is capitalized, but many modern poets choose not to follow this rule strictly.
Prose looks like large blocks of words.	The shape of poetry can vary depending on line length and the intent of the poet.