

# Oscar Wilde: Quotes and Aphorisms

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## ART & LIFE

Paradoxically though it may seem, it is none the less true that life imitates art far more than art imitates life.

The first duty in life is to be as artificial as possible. What the second duty is no one has as yet discovered.

One should either be a work of art, or wear a work of art.

I have the simplest tastes. I am always satisfied with the best.

Life is far too important to be taken seriously.

The aim of life is self-development. To realize one's nature perfectly -- that is whom each of us is here for. People are afraid of themselves, nowadays. They have forgotten the highest of all duties, the duty that one owes to one's self.

Every impulse that we strive to strangle broods in the mind, and poisons us. The only way to get rid of a temptation is to yield to it.

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## YOUTH

I am not young enough to know everything..

The soul is born old but grows young. That is the comedy of life. And the body is born young and grows old. That is life's tragedy.

The old believe everything: the middle-aged suspect everything: the young know everything.

The condition of perfection is idleness: the aim of perfection is youth.

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## CYNICISM

A man who does not think for himself does not think at all

Always forgive your enemies; nothing annoys them so much.

The way to get rid of temptation is to yield to it.

The only thing to do with good advice is pass it on; it is never of any use to oneself.  
"The pure and simple truth is rarely pure and never simple."

If one tells the truth, one is sure, sooner or later, to be found out.

Pleasure is the only thing one should live for. Nothing ages like happiness.

No crime is vulgar, but all vulgarity is crime. Vulgarity is the conduct of others.

Any preoccupation with ideas of what is right and wrong in conduct shows an arrested intellectual development.

A truth ceases to be true when more than one person believes in it.

To love oneself is the beginning of a life-long romance.

There is only one thing in the world worse than being talked about, and that is not being talked about.

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## **MEDIOCRITY**

Most people are other people. Their thoughts are someone else's opinions, their lives a mimicry, their passions a quotation.

Only the shallow know themselves.

We are all in the gutter, but some of us are looking at the stars.

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## **WOMEN**

The only way a woman can ever reform her husband is by boring him so completely that he loses all possible interest in life.

Women have a wonderful instinct about things. They can discover everything except the obvious.

When a man has once loved a woman he will do anything for her except continue to love her.

Bigamy is having one wife too many. Monogamy is the same.

Those who are faithful know only the trivial side of love: it is the faithless who know love's tragedies.

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## **SCHOOL**

We teach people how to remember, we never teach them how to grow.

Education is an admirable thing, but it is well to remember from time to time that nothing that is worth knowing can be taught.

In examinations the foolish ask questions that the wise cannot answer.

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America is the only country that went from barbarism to decadence without civilization in between.