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Quotes about Fools and Foolishness

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Nature makes only dumb animals. We owe the fools to society.

- Balzac, Honore De

In days gone by, we were afraid of dying in dishonor or a state of sin. Nowadays, we are afraid of dying fools. Now the fact is that there is no Extreme Unction to absolve us of foolishness. We endure it here on earth as subjective eternity.

- Baudrillard, Jean

Sometimes the fool who rushes in gets the job done.

- Bernstein, Al

A fool and his money get a lot of publicity.

- Bernstein, Al

There are two kinds of fools: those who can't change their opinions and those who won't.

- Billings, Josh

Take all the fools out of this world and there wouldn't be any fun living in it, or profit.

- Billings, Josh

The best way to convince a fool that he is wrong is to let him have his way.

- Billings, Josh

Every fool finds a greater one to admire them.

- Bioleau

A fool sees not the same tree that a wise man sees.

- Blake, William

However big the fool, there is always a bigger fool to admire him.

- Boileau, Nicholas

Greatest fools are the most often satisfied.

- Boileau, Nicholas

A fool always finds a greater fool to admire him.

- Boileau, Nicholas

Foolproof systems do not take into account the ingenuity of fools.

- Brown, Gene

There are more fools than knaves in the world, else the knaves would not have enough to live upon.

- Butler, Samuel

Any fool can criticize, condemn, and complain -- and most fools do.

- Carnegie, Dale

He is mad past recovery, but yet he has lucid intervals.

- Cervantes, Miguel De

How many fools does it take to make up a public?

- Chamfort, Sebastien-Roch Nicolas De

When he said we were trying to make a fool of him, I could only murmur that the Creator had beat us to it.

- Chase, Ilka

It is the peculiar quality of a fool to perceive the faults of others and to forget his own.

- Cicero, Marcus T.

A fool often fails because he thinks what is difficult is easy.

- Collins, John Churton

A fool despises good counsel, but a wise man takes it to heart.

- Confucius

The wise make proverbs, and fools repeat them.

- Disraeli, Isaac

In the vain laughter of folly wisdom hears half its applause.

- Eliot, George

Men who know themselves are no longer fools. They stand on the threshold of the door of Wisdom.

- Ellis, Havelock

The entire world is my temple, and a very fine one too, if I'm not mistaken, and I'll never lack priests to serve it as long as there are men.

- Erasmus, Desiderius

In short, no association or alliance can be happy or stable without me. People can't long tolerate a ruler, nor can a master his servant, a maid her mistress, a teacher his pupil, a friend his friend nor a wife her husband, a landlord his tenant, a soldier his comrade nor a party-goer his companion, unless they sometimes have illusions about each other, make use of flattery, and have the sense to turn a blind eye and sweeten life for themselves with the honey of folly.

- Erasmus, Desiderius

Fools are without number.

- Erasmus, Desiderius

Commend a fool for his wit, or a rogue for his honesty and he will receive you into his favor.

- Fielding, Henry

There are two fools in this world. One is the millionaire who thinks that by hoarding money he can somehow accumulate real power, and the other is the penniless reformer who thinks that if only he can take the money from one class and give it to another, all the world's ills will be cured.

- Ford, Henry

Most fools think they are only ignorant.

- Franklin, Benjamin

The world is full of fools and faint hearts; and yet everyone has courage enough to bear the misfortunes, and wisdom enough to manage the affairs of his neighbor.

- Franklin, Benjamin

Spinoza Experience keeps a dear school, but fools will learn in no other.

- Franklin, Benjamin

Who is more foolish, the child afraid of the dark, or the man afraid of the light?

- Freehill, Maurice

A mother takes twenty years to make a man of her boy, and another woman makes a fool of him in twenty minutes.

- Frost, Robert

There are four types of men in this world: 1. The man who knows, and knows that he knows; he is wise, so consult him. 2. The man who knows, but doesn't know that he knows; help him not forget what he knows. 3. The man who knows not, and knows that he knows not; teach him. 4. Finally, there is the man who knows not but pretends that he knows; he is a fool, so avoid him.

- Gabirol, Ibn

Sometimes one likes foolish people for their folly, better than wise people for their wisdom.

- Gaskell, Elizabeth

It seems to never occur to fools that merit and good fortune are closely united.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

The company of fools may first make us smile, but in the end we always feel melancholy.

- Goldsmith, Oliver

No one but a fool would measure their satisfaction by what the world thinks of it.

- Goldsmith, Oliver

While intelligent people can often simplify the complex, a fool is more likely to complicate the simple.

- Grumet, Gerald W.

No one but a fool is always right.

- Hare, David

When in doubt, make a fool of yourself. There is a microscopically thin line between being brilliantly creative and acting like the most gigantic idiot on earth. So what the hell, leap.

- Heimel, Cynthia

Why fools are endowed by nature with voices so much louder than sensible people possess is a mystery. It is a fact emphasized throughout history.

- Hertzler

Mix a little foolishness with your serious plans. It is lovely to be silly at the right moment.

- Horace

The biggest fool in the world is he who merely does his work supremely well, without attending to appearance.

- Korda, Michael

He who lives without folly isn't so wise as he thinks.

- La Rochefoucauld, Francois De

You ask whether I have ever been in love: fool as I am, I am not such a fool as that. But if one is only to talk from first-hand experience, conversation would be a very poor business. But though I have no personal experience of the things they call love, I have what is better -- the experience of Sappho, of Euripides, of Catallus, of Shakespeare, of Spenser, of Austen, of Bronte, of anyone else I have read.

- Lewis, C. S.

A clever child brought up with a foolish one can itself become foolish. Man is so perfectible and corruptible he can become a fool through good sense.

- Lichtenberg, Georg C.

Better to remain silent and be thought a fool, than to speak and remove all doubt.

- Lincoln, Abraham

Colleges don't make fools, they only develop them.

- Lorimer, Geroge

Who loves not women, wine and song remains a fool his whole life long.

- Luther, Martin

It has been said that there is no fool like an old fool, except a young fool. But the young fool has first to grow up to be an old fool to realize what a damn fool he was when he was a young fool.

- Macmillan, Harold

A fellow who is always declaring that he's no fool, usually has his suspicions.

- Mizner, Wilson

A learned fool is more foolish than an ignorant one.

- Moliere

Fortune, seeing that she could not make fools wise, has made them lucky.

- Montaigne, Michel Eyquem De

Fools rush in where Angels fear to tread.

- Pope, Alexander

A fool and his money are soon parted.

- Proverb

The fool is always beginning to live.

- Proverb

Only a fool tests the depth of the water with both feet.

- Proverb, African

He who asks is a fool for five minutes, but he who does not ask remains a fool forever.

- Proverb, Chinese

If a man fools me once, shame on him. If he fools me twice, shame on me.

- Proverb, Chinese

Fools build houses, and wise men buy them.

- Proverb, English

He is a fool that kisseth the maid when he may kiss the mistress.

- Proverb, English

The fool has to do at last what the wise did at first.

- Proverb, Italian

Don't approach a goat from the front, a horse from the back, or a fool from any side.

- Proverb, Jewish

He who knows he who knows not, and knows not that he knows not, is a fool, shun him;
He who knows not, and knows that he knows not, is a child, teach him. He who knows,
and knows not that he knows, is asleep, wake him. He who knows, and knows that he
knows, is wise, follow him.

- Proverb, Persian

What a fool does in the end, the wise do in the beginning.

- Proverb, Spanish

A spoon does not know the taste of soup, nor a learned fool the taste of wisdom.

- Proverb, Welsh

In life, each of us must sometimes play the fool.

- Proverb, Yiddish

They never open their mouths without subtracting from the sum of human knowledge.

- Reed, Thomas Brackett

The great God endows His children variously. To some he gives intellect -- and they move
the earth. To some he allots heart -- and the beating pulse of humanity is theirs. But to

some He gives only a soul, without intelligence -- and these, who never grow up, but remain always His children, are God's fools, kindly, elemental, simple, as if from His palette the Artist of all had taken one color instead of many.

- Rinehart, Mary Roberts

The fool needs company, the wise solitude.

- Ruckett

Folly is perennial, yet the human race has survived.

- Russell, Bertrand

If fifty million people say a foolish thing, it is still a foolish thing.

- Russell, Bertrand

The person who writes for fools is always sure of a large audience.

- Schopenhauer, Arthur

A foolishness is inflicted with a hatred of itself.

- Seneca

The haste of a fool is the slowest thing in the world.

- Shadwell, Thomas

Lord, what fools these mortals be.

- Shakespeare, William

The fool thinks himself to be wise, but the wise man knows himself to be a fool.

[Measure For Measure]

- Shakespeare, William

The dullness of the fool is the whetstone of the wits.

- Shakespeare, William

He uses his folly like a stalking-horse, and under the presentation of that he shoots his wit.

- Shakespeare, William

Build a system that even a fool can use, and only a fool will want to use it.

- Shaw, George Bernard

On Monday mornings I am dedicated to the proposition that all men are created jerks.

- Smith, H. Allen

Seek but provision of bread and wine, fools to flatter, and clothing fine; and nothing of God shall ever be thine.

- Smith, Wes

The ultimate result of shielding men from the effects of folly, is to fill the world with fools.

- Spencer, Herbert

The fool within himself is the object of pity, until he is flattered.

- Steele, Sir Richard

That's the penalty we have to pay for our acts of foolishness -- someone else always suffers for them.

- Sutro, Alfred

The folly of all follies is to be love sick for a shadow.

- Tennyson, Lord Alfred

I was young and foolish then; now I am old and foolisher.

- Twain, Mark

It is better to keep your mouth closed and let people think you are a fool than to open it and remove all doubt.

- Twain, Mark

It is better to remain silent and be thought a fool than to speak up and remove all doubt.

- Unknown, Source

It is impossible to make anything foolproof because fools are so ingenious.

- Unknown, Source

It is rude to silence a fool, and cruelty to let him go on.

- Unknown, Source

Its quite true there's a fool born every minute. It's also quite true they don't die that fast.

- Unknown, Source

Looking foolish does the spirit good. The need not to look foolish is one of youth's many burdens; as we get older we are exempted from more and more, and float upward in our heedlessness, singing Gratia Dei sum quod sum.

- Updike, John



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