

**J. FOSTER
HISTORIC SIGNS**

*Handcrafted signs
in the style of
18th & 19th
century artisans.*

MIND YOUR P's & Q's

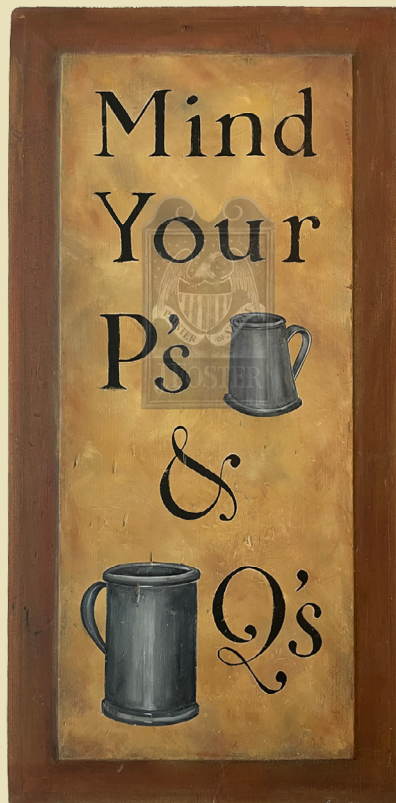
The origin of this idiom relates to the early 17th century and it isn't until the mid 18th century that we get the phrase mind your P's and Q's itself. To mind one's P's and Q's is to be on one's best behavior, to mind one's manners.

Other numerous explanations of origin include the phrase p's and q's coming from teaching children to read and write; printers having difficulty distinguishing the lowercase letters "p" and "q"; a sailor's pea coat and pigtail, or queue; and to pied and queue, terms from French referring to dance steps.

Another appearance of the phrase is in Thomas Francklin's 1776 play *The Contract*. In a comic scene the characters of Colonel Lovemore and Eleanor Briggs, assisted by their two servants, feign courtship while actually detesting one another. Upon the two women's approach, the Colonel's servant, Martin, tells Lovemore to mind your p's and q's, to pay attention to the manners and customs, in this case of courtship.

It first appears in print in the 1756 *Life and Memoirs of Mr. Ephraim Tristram Bates*. In it, Bates is dispensing advice on how one should travel: Mind your P's and your Q's, and always travel in the Autumn.—Away for Gloucester.—Brother Firelock.—Huzza, I wish I am not robb'd tho'!

But for our purpose in telling the history of taverns, we refer to the relation made from the English pubs which had "P" and "Q" representing pints and quarts, from which tavern keepers tallied the amounts of their chosen beverage consumed by customers. —Sources: *phrases.com and wordorigins.org*



This sign was painted on a reclaimed panel board using water-soluble oils. The reverse side treated with sealing oils. The size is 12" wide by 24" high. Please message for pricing.

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