

PLAGIARISM

<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/589/01/>

What is it?

- Buying, stealing or borrowing a paper (including of course copying an entire paper or article from the Web)
- Hiring someone to write your paper
- Copying large sections of text from a source without quotation marks or proper citation

When do we give credit?

The key to avoiding plagiarism is to make sure you give credit where it is due. This may be credit for something somebody said, wrote, emailed, drew, or implied. These include: words or ideas presented in a magazine, book, newspaper, song, TV program, movie, Web page, computer program, letter, advertisement, or any other medium.

- Information you gain through interviewing or conversing with another person, face to face, over the phone, or in writing
- When you copy the exact words or a unique phrase
- When you reprint any diagrams, illustrations, charts, pictures, or other visual materials
- When you reuse or repost any electronically-available media, including images, audio, video, or other media

Bottom line, document any words, ideas, or other productions that originate somewhere outside of you.

What Doesn't Need Documentation:

- Writing your own lived experiences, your own observations and insights, your own thoughts, and your own conclusions about a subject
- When you are writing up your own results obtained through lab or field experiments
- When you use your own artwork, digital photographs, video, audio, etc.
- When you are using "common knowledge," things like folklore, common sense observations, myths, urban legends, and historical events (but **not** historical documents)
- When you are using generally-accepted facts, e.g., pollution is bad for the environment, including facts that are accepted within particular discourse communities, e.g., in the field of composition studies, "writing is a process" is a generally-accepted fact.

Deciding if something is "common knowledge"

Generally speaking, you can regard something as common knowledge if you find the same information undocumented in at least five credible sources. Additionally, it might be common knowledge if you think the information you're presenting is something your readers will already know, or something that a person could easily find in general reference sources. But when in doubt, cite; if the citation turns out to be unnecessary, your teacher or editor will tell you.

Safe Practices: HOW TO AVOID PLAGAIRISM

Reading and note-taking

- In your notes, always mark someone else's words with a big **Q**, for quote, or use big quotation marks
- Indicate in your notes which ideas are taken from sources with a big **S**, and which are your own insights (**ME**)
- When information comes from sources, record relevant documentation in your notes (book and article titles; URLs on the Web)

Writing paraphrases or summaries (see paraphrasing handout)

Writing direct quotations

- *Keep the source author's name in the same sentence as the quote*
- Mark the quote with quotation marks, or set it off from your text in its own block, per the style guide your paper follows
- Quote no more material than is necessary; if a short phrase from a source will suffice, don't quote an entire paragraph
- To shorten quotes by removing extra information, use ellipsis points (...) to indicate omitted text, keeping in mind that:
 - In longer quotes where you have omitted a sentence in between other complete sentences, maintain terminal punctuation in between the ellipses.
 - **Example:** "None of the national reports I saw made even passing references to inequality or segregation. . . . Booker T. Washington was cited with increasing frequency, Du Bois never, and Martin Luther King only with cautious selectivity." (Kozol 3).
- To give context to a quote or otherwise add wording to it, place added words in brackets, ([]); be careful not to editorialize or make any additions that skew the original meaning of the quote—do that in your main text, e.g.,
 - **OK:** Kozol claims there are "savage inequalities" in our educational system, which is obvious.
 - **WRONG:** Kozol claims there are "[obvious] savage inequalities" in our educational system.

Writing about another's ideas

- *Note the name of the idea's originator in the sentence or throughout a paragraph about the idea*
- Use parenthetical citations, footnotes, or endnotes to refer readers to additional sources about the idea, as necessary
- Be sure to use quotation marks around key phrases or words that the idea's originator used to describe the idea

Revising, proofreading, and finalizing your paper

- Proofread and cross-check with your notes and sources to make sure that anything coming from an outside source is acknowledged in some combination of the following ways:
 - In-text citation, otherwise known as parenthetical citation
 - Footnotes or endnotes
 - Bibliography, References, or Works Cited pages
 - Quotation marks around short quotes; longer quotes set off by themselves, as prescribed by a research and citation style guide
 - Indirect quotations: citing a source that cites another source
 - If you have any questions about citation, ask your instructor **well in advance** of your paper's due date, so if you have to make any adjustments to your citations, you have the time to do them well.