

Plagiarism Basics: What You Should Know

What is plagiarism?

Plagiarism is defined as the representation of the words or ideas of another as one's own, including:

- direct quotation without both attribution and indication that the material is being directly quoted; e.g., quotation marks;
- paraphrase without attribution;
- paraphrase with or without attribution where wording of the original remains substantially intact and is represented as the author's own;
- expression in one's own words, but without attribution, of ideas, arguments, lines of reasoning, facts, processes, or other products of the intellect where such material is learned from the work of another and is not part of the general fund of common academic knowledge

How do I avoid plagiarism?

It is easy to avoid plagiarism if you always cite the sources you use. Citing sources not only gives the appropriate credit to the original creator of the work but it also allows those reading your work to refer back to the sources you consulted.

In order to accurately cite sources you need to include things like the:

- Name of the author(s)
- Title of the work
- Date of publication
- Name of the publisher
- Page numbers that contain the content you're citing

The format of the information you include in your citations is governed by specific rules outlined in citation style manuals.

When using the library's resources in your papers, you can avoid plagiarism by knowing what must be documented.

- **Specific words and phrases:** If you use an author's specific word or words, you must place those words within quotation marks **and** you must credit the source.
- **Information and Ideas:** Even if you use your own words, if you obtained the information or ideas you are presenting from a source, you must document the source.
- **Information:** If a piece of information isn't common knowledge you need to provide a source.
- **Ideas:** An author's ideas may include not only points made and conclusions drawn, but, for instance, a specific method or theory, the arrangement of material, or a list of steps in a process or characteristics of a medical condition. If a source provided any of these, you need to acknowledge the source.