



WRITING CENTER

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Plagiarism

College writing often requires you to cite the ideas of others while acknowledging all your sources. The term *plagiarism* refers to the unacknowledged use of another individual's work. This definition of plagiarism covers both blatant and unintentional misuse of other people's ideas. Plagiarism is considered academic misconduct and can carry severe consequences. An obvious form of plagiarism is copying from your source material without providing quotation marks and without crediting the source. A more subtle form, but equally improper, is the paraphrasing of material or use of an original idea that is not properly introduced and documented. *Remember that another author's ideas, interpretations, and words are his or her property; they are, in fact, protected by law and must be acknowledged whenever you borrow them. Your own ideas, interpretations, and words are also your property; they also are protected.*

Basic Citation Rules and Examples

Always keep in mind that different academic disciplines have different methods for documenting sources. If you are unsure about which particular guidelines you should be following, ask your professor or adviser. The CSTW Writing Center also has handouts on some of these different styles, such as MLA and APA.

Acknowledge borrowed material within your text by surrounding this material with quotation marks if you are using it exactly as it appears in the publication or electronic source. It is a good idea to introduce such quoted material with the name of the person who wrote it.

If you are summarizing rather than directly quoting material, give credit by introducing your summary with the name of the person (or publication/electronic source if there isn't an identified author) who wrote it.

Enclose all quoted materials within quotation marks. When using a quotation, **use ellipses** to show where you have omitted any words or sentences from the original text.

Make certain that paraphrased or summarized material is rewritten **into your own style and language**. *It is not acceptable to merely rearrange the sentence structure or substitute a few new words or phrases.*

Provide **specific documentation** for each borrowed item. *Make a bibliographic entry for every book, journal, website, or other source of information that you reference in your paper.*