

# Plagiarism and Paraphrasing

Citing your sources will help you avoid plagiarism. But what is plagiarism?

According to many dictionaries to Plagiarize is:

- to steal and pass off (the ideas or words of another) as one's own
- to use (another's production) without crediting the source
- to commit literary theft
- to present as new and original an idea or product derived from an existing source

In other words, plagiarism is an act of fraud. It involves both stealing someone else's work and lying about it afterward. (Plagiarism, 2017)

There are many ways that you could plagiarize and not realize. See Turnitin's Plagiarism Spectrum:

<https://www.turnitin.com/static/plagiarism-spectrum/>

1. For instance, if you submit something word-for-word as your own, you have plagiarized. Especially, if you have had someone else write the paper for you and you just put your name on it. (*Clone*)
2. If you simply copy and paste a sentence or paragraph without citing its source, you have plagiarized. (*CTRL+C*)
3. If you copy a sentence and change a few words or phrases, but keep the same sentence structure, you have plagiarized. (*Find and Replace*)
4. If you submit a paper that you used somewhere else, such as in another class, but don't change anything, you have plagiarized yourself. If you do want to attempt to submit a previous work of your own, ask your instructor first. (*Recycle*)

If you are not careful and don't cite your sources, you could end up plagiarizing which could lead to failing an assignment to failing a class. If you plagiarize in the workplace, you could lose your job.

So try to avoid it by, citing your sources, writing in your own words and using quotations with the proper in-text citations.

When in doubt, cite your sources. This can help you show that you are not just using another's words, but that you have processed and understood the ideas that your source is providing. It can also strengthen your own thoughts, by showing outside support to your ideas.

Most instructors will want you to paraphrase, rather than directly quote something. A paraphrase is restating another's idea in your own words. Simply changing a few words around in the original sentence is not a legitimate paraphrase.

Knowing how to paraphrase properly, can help your own ideas shine while showing that there have been others to back up your words. Give credit where it is due, but try showcase your own writing.

# Paraphrasing Worksheet

Use the following worksheet to practice.

*The Six Steps to Effective Paraphrasing from the O.W.L. at Purdue:*

[https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research\\_and\\_citation/using\\_research/quoting\\_paraphrasing\\_and\\_summarizing/paraphrasing.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/using_research/quoting_paraphrasing_and_summarizing/paraphrasing.html)

1. Reread the original passage until you understand its full meaning.
2. Set the original aside, and write your paraphrase on a note card.
3. Jot down a few words below your paraphrase to remind you later how you envision using this material. At the top of the note card, write a key word or phrase to indicate the subject of your paraphrase.
4. Check your rendition with the original to make sure that your version accurately expresses all the essential information in a new form.
5. Use quotation marks to identify any unique term or phraseology you have borrowed exactly from the source.
6. Record the source (including the page) on your note card so that you can credit it easily if you decide to incorporate the material into your paper.

**Exact Quote or Idea You wish to use and its Source:**

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**What are the main points that you wish to get across in your own writing?**

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**Try to paraphrase and use your own words, then check that the sentence structure is different and any unique terms or phrases are in quotations (you can also follow the steps above if you wish):**

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\*When in doubt, if you can't adequately paraphrase, quote and cite.

\*Adapted, with changes from Plagiaism.org and O.W.L. at Purdue.