

# Plagiarism

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*Everyone's an Author* (pp. 527-534) and Purdue's Online Writing Lab (OWL) ([owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/589/01/](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/589/01/)) cover all the topics you will need in order to cite properly. They also can offer specific help on how to format your citations. Use them as well as this paper to cite your sources correctly.

## What is plagiarism?

In Academic Writing, plagiarism is the uncredited use, intentional or unintentional, of another's words or ideas. When you reference another's words or ideas, you must always use an in-text citation! Plagiarism is:

- ➔ If you use another's words as your own.
- ➔ if you pass off an original idea as your own.
  - Example: "I invented the internet." (And you didn't.)

## What are some often missed citations?

- ➔ Online discussion boards, class discussion, interviews, or conversation with an expert in the field.
- ➔ Song lyrics, magazines and newspaper articles, quotes from a TV program.
- ➔ When you are defining a word or technical term, especially if you are using someone else's language.

## What does not need citation?

- ➔ Your own observations, experiences, or attitudes.
- ➔ Your own results from a lab or experiment.
- ➔ Common knowledge (folklore, urban legends, common sense observations, or general knowledge).

## What is common knowledge?

- ➔ A source is probably common knowledge if you can find it undocumented in 3 or more credible sources. Some examples of common knowledge are:
  - Virginia is in the United States.
  - Dogs are mammals.

**When in doubt, it is usually better to cite than not!**