

Plagiarism is the practice of using the work or ideas of another individual or entity without giving necessary credit. If you use the ideas or words of another person in your writing, it is important that you give credit to that source using a documentation style (i.e. APA, MLA, Chicago). Documentation styles vary by discipline, so it is important that you consult with your professor about which one to use in your writing.

*The CASA Writing Center has a variety of resources available to help you cite sources in your writing.*

## Types of Plagiarism

**Cheating:** Borrowing, purchasing, or obtaining work composed by someone else (Moore-Howard, 1995).

*Examples of cheating:*

- Turning in any portion of another student’s work while claiming it is your own.
- Downloading, copying, or purchasing any portion of writing off of the Internet and turning it in as your own.
- Submitting a paper for a grade in one course that was written for another course.
  - Note: If you would like to continue the research and work written for another class, you must notify the instructor(s) and obtain instructor permission.

**Patchwriting:** Writing that is similar to the original source material with some minor changes to the wording. The sentence structure also mirrors the source’s sentence structure (Moore-Howard, 1995). The most common instances of patchwriting occur when inappropriately paraphrasing or summarizing information from source material.

### 5 Steps to Avoiding Patchwriting

1. Read the passage.
2. Set it aside, and do not look back at the passage.
3. Ask yourself, “What is the author’s meaning?”
4. In your own words, write down the author’s main point or ideas.
5. Read your paraphrase or summary, and compare it to the source material.  
Does it convey the main point or ideas of the source without using similar words, phrases, or sentence structure?

**Non-attribution:** Copying the words or ideas of a source word-for-word without giving credit to the author or using quotation marks. This can include copying and pasting a sentence or paragraph from another source into your own paper or including a quotation without citing it.

**Misuse of Sources:** The incorrect documentation or quotation of source material. Although an attempt at documentation is made by the writer, he/she has failed to correctly cite according the documentation style (i.e. APA, MLA, Chicago).

## Ways to Avoid Plagiarism

- If you are unsure if something needs to be cited, cite! It is better to have an unnecessary citation than to not include one that is necessary.
- Keep a working list of the sources you gather during your research.
  - Format your list of sources in the documentation style you are using. This will make it easier to correctly cite these sources in your writing.
- Cite as you write.
- Have your documentation style guide (i.e. MLA, APA) readily available as you write.
- Ask questions: your instructor, your peers, the Writing Center, librarians.

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## Quoting, Paraphrasing, and Summarizing

A quotation is a word-for-word reprinting of another person's words. When writing, a quote is typically indicated by using quotation marks (" ") and includes an in-text citation to indicate the source of the original words.

When do I use a direct quote in my writing?

- When language is especially vivid or expressive
- When exact wording is needed for accuracy
- When it is important to let the debaters of an issue explain their positions in their own words
- When words of an authority lend weight to an argument
- When the language of the source is the topic of your discussion

A paraphrase is an expression of another person's *ideas* in your own words without the use of quotation marks. The sentence structure and phrasing must not be the same as the original source material, and any phrases from the original text must be placed in quotation marks. A paraphrase includes an in-text citation to indicate the source of the original idea.

When do I use a paraphrase in my writing?

- To convey ideas of a source in your own words
- To explain or illustrate a point to your audience
- To include the details of a source without using the exact wording of the source
- To show your audience that you understand the source

A summary focuses on the main point(s) of an entire source (i.e. an article, chapter, or large section of a work). Like a paraphrase, a summary must reference the original source. Unlike a paraphrase, a summary does not focus on the details of the source. Instead, a summary focuses on the major concept(s) of the source.

When do I use a summary in my writing?

- To express the main idea of a source without including supporting details
- To condense a source's information
- To give an overview of major sources on a particular topic

### Resources:

- TAMUCC Code of Conduct: [http://studentaffairs.tamucc.edu/TAMUCC\\_student\\_handbook.pdf](http://studentaffairs.tamucc.edu/TAMUCC_student_handbook.pdf)
- Purdue Owl on Plagiarism: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/589/01/>
- American Psychological Association (APA): <http://www.apastyle.org/>
  - APA Style Blog: <http://blog.apastyle.org/>
- Modern Language Association (MLA): <http://www.mla.org/style>
  - MLA Style on Purdue OWL: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/2/11/>
- The Chicago Manual of Style Online: [http://chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools\\_citationguide.html](http://chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html)
- Turabian Quick Guide: [http://www.press.uchicago.edu/books/turabian/turabian\\_citationguide.html](http://www.press.uchicago.edu/books/turabian/turabian_citationguide.html)

The information for this handout was compiled from the following sources:

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