

Tips for Preventing Plagiarism

Plan your Paper

Planning your paper well is the first and most important step you can take toward preventing plagiarism. This means working out a balance between the ideas you have taken from other sources and your own, original ideas. Writing an outline or coming up with a thesis statement in which you clearly formulate an argument about the information you find will help establish the boundaries between your ideas and those of your sources.

One of the best ways to prepare for a paper is by taking thorough notes from all of your sources so that you have much of the information organized before you begin writing. On the other hand, poor note-taking can lead to many problems - including **improper citations** and **misquotations**, both of which are forms of plagiarism. To avoid confusion about your sources, try using different colored fonts, pens, or pencils for each one, and make sure you clearly distinguish your own ideas from those you found elsewhere. Also, get in the habit of marking page numbers, and make sure that you record bibliographic information or web addresses for every source right away - finding them again later when you are trying to finish your paper can be a nightmare.

Cite and Reference

Any time that you include material in your work that is not your own, you must cite and reference. Citing and referencing is an important part of academic writing that not only prevents plagiarism and distinguishes originality, but also brings to light how new ideas are either formed upon, different from, or in agreement with pre-existing ideas.

A **citation** refers to the works of others in your text. It normally requires you to record relevant source information, such as the author's last name, the page number(s) from which the borrowed information is taken, or the source's year of publication, in parentheses.

A **reference** provides the list of information necessary for a reader to locate and retrieve any source you cite in the body of your paper. It normally requires you to record relevant source information such as the author's last and first name, work title, publication city, publisher, publication year, and/or publication medium of the borrowed words or ideas, on the very last page of your paper.

Your instructor may expect you to use **citation styles** such as APA (American Psychological Association) or MLA (Modern Language Association) to format your citations and references. For example, when using MLA style for your citations, you must include the author's last name and the page number(s) from which the borrowed information is taken, in parentheses, "(Smith 12)" vs. when using APA style, you must include the author's last name, the source's year of publication, and the page number(s) from which the borrowed information is taken, in parentheses, "(Smith, 1998, p.122)".

Although it may take some to get used to, learning how to properly cite and reference boosts your credibility and improves your writing skills! A great resource to show you how to cite and reference is the [Purdue OWL Citation Chart](#). This chart provides a range of examples of how you would write citations and references using different sources (books, websites, articles, etc.) and citation guidelines.

Why Do You Cite and Reference?

- Helps readers find out more about your ideas and where they come from
- Shows the amount of research you have done
- Strengthens your work by lending outside support to your ideas
- Prevents plagiarism by giving credit to other sources

When Do You Cite and Reference?

- When using direct and indirect quotes
- When paraphrasing
- When summarizing
- When using an idea that someone else has already expressed
- When making a specific reference to the work of another
- When using facts, data, information from exclusive sources
- When someone else's work has been critical in developing your own ideas

Summarizing

A summary is a concise statement of another person's thoughts or ideas in your own words. A summary is normally shorter than the original. When summarizing other people's ideas, arguments, or conclusions, you must cite your sources.

Example

Original Text:

These results suggest that morning people, or early chronotypes—as measured on the morningness–eveningness continuum are more proactive than are evening types. Additionally, the misalignment of social and biological time, as assessed by the difference between rise times on weekdays and on free days, correlated with proactivity, suggesting that people with a high misalignment of social and biological time may be less able to act in a proactive manner, probably because of sleep delay. Their biological schedules seem not to fit neatly into social demands (e.g., school, university, work schedules) as do those of less misaligned people.

Randler, C. (2009). Proactive people are morning people. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 39(12), 2787-2797.

Summary:

Recent research shows that people who are not naturally early risers often have persistent issues adjusting themselves to the morning-oriented schedule of most schools and workplaces, and because of this may be less proactive in their behaviors (Randler, 2009).

Paraphrase

Paraphrase the source if you can restate the idea more clearly or simply, or if you want to place the idea in the flow of your own thoughts—though be sure to announce your source in your own text (“Albert Einstein believed that...”) and always include a citation. A paraphrase is a restatement of another person's thoughts or ideas in your own words, using your own sentence structure. A paraphrase is normally about the same length as the original. Although you do not need to use quotation marks when you paraphrase, you absolutely do need to cite the source, either in parentheses or in a footnote. If another author's idea is particularly well put, quote it verbatim and use quotation marks to distinguish that author's words from your own.

Example

Original Text:

These results suggest that morning people, or early chronotypes—as measured on the morningness–eveningness continuum are more proactive than are evening types. Additionally, the misalignment of social and biological time, as assessed by the difference between rise times on weekdays and on free days, correlated with proactivity, suggesting that people with a high misalignment of social and biological time may be less able to act in a proactive manner, probably because of sleep delay. Their biological schedules seem not to fit neatly into social demands (e.g., school, university, work schedules) as do those of less misaligned people.

Randler, C. (2009). Proactive people are morning people. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 39(12), 2787-2797.

Paraphrase:

People who are naturally morning people have been shown to also display traits that are considered proactive, and late risers display fewer of these traits because they don't get enough sleep on days when they have to go to work or school. (Randler, 2009, p. 2793).

Additional Resources

Writing Support Desk: Visit by appointment or drop-in hours to receive assistance or attend their Citation Workshops to learn more about the different guidelines and how to integrate sources into academic writing. Email any additional questions you may have to writingsupport@uwindsor.ca.

Leddy Library: Visit the [Library's website for avoiding plagiarism](#) and the Library's website for writing help to learn more about avoiding plagiarism.

Zotero (Bibliographic Management Software): Use as your personal, free assistant to help you collect, organize, cite, and share your research sources. For more information, visit the [Library's use of Zotero to help build your bibliography](#) or [go to www.zotero.org](http://www.zotero.org) for direct use.

Purdue OWL Citation Chart: Refer to this chart to receive a [breakdown on citations and references for different sources using MLA, APA, and CMS formats.](#)

Purdue OWL: [APA Formatting and Style Guide](#) or [MLA Formatting and Style Guide](#).

Prevent Plagiarism: [More about understanding and preventing plagiarism here.](#)

YouTube Videos:

- [Introduction to Academic Integrity](#)
- [Academic Tips](#)
- [Citation and Referencing](#)
- [Campus Resources](#)

Sources

<https://integrity.mit.edu/handbook/academic-writing/summarizing>

<http://library.fitchburgstate.edu/research/citation-tools/quotation-paraphrasing-summary>

<https://www.mesacc.edu/~paaih30491/ArgumentsQuoteSummarizeParaphr.html>

<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/05/>

<http://www.plagiarism.org>

<https://www.princeton.edu/pr/pub/integrity/pages/cite/>