How to Avoid Plagiarism

**What is Plagiarism?**

Middle Georgia State University’s student handbook defines plagiarism as follows:

* Using the words of others but failing to cite the source
* Passing off monetized materials as your work
* Using material from the internet without proper citation
* Using material you have previously written without acknowledging its previous use (also known as self-plagiarism)

(Middle Georgia State University).

The University of Fairfax separates plagiarism into the following categories:

* **Direct plagiarism**: Presenting another’s information as your own
* **Unintentional plagiarism**: Failing to cite sources, poorly paraphrasing, and misquoting
* **Self-plagiarism**: Using an assignment you have already done for another course without permission and failing to cite yourself.

(University of Fairfax Library).

If you do not understand how to avoid plagiarism, then at some point you will plagiarize even if it is unintentional.

**Strategies for Avoiding Plagiarism**

* Always give credit even if you are unsure if you need to.
* Correctly use paraphrasing.
* Correctly use quotations.
* Cite your sources with the help of a cite source publication or software, i.e. Microsoft Word.
* Include a reference page.
* Ask your instructor for assistance.
* Have someone else proofread your work to make sure that you have cited everything correctly.
* When you use someone else’s information, take note of the author, title, website, and publication information.
* Contribute original ideas to your paper.
* Use tools such as RefWorks and EndNote to record your citations.

(Massachusetts Institute of Technology).

**Tips for Quoting**

* It is better to over cite than to omit credit by mistake.
* Maintain one format for sourcing, preferably APA or MLA if your professor does not specify.
* Parenthesize the source to mark the end of the borrowed passage and to credit the author.
* Record where and who you got your information from to avoid unintentional plagiarism.
* If you use a direct quote, insert quotations and cite the work.
* If a quote can be paraphrased in your own words, then you should do that and cite the work.

(Procter).

**Tips for Paraphrasing**

* Use your own words and phrases to clarify the author’s ideas (Procter).
* Preserve the author’s original intent (Procter).
* Referring to the author early in the paraphrase indicates the beginning of the borrowed passage (Procter).
* Keep research notes and personal commentary on separate pages (Otis College of Art and Design).
* Decide if the statement needs to be in quotations or if it is equally effective to paraphrase (Procter).

**Online Resources**

Plagiarism Checker: https://www.grammarly.com/plagiarism-checker

Plagiarism: https://writingcenter.unc.edu/tips-and-tools/plagiarism/

Plagiarism: What is plagiarism and how to avoid it: https://otis.libguides.com/plagiarism

Causes of Plagiarism: https://www.kent.edu/writingcommons/causes-plagiarism

Plagiarism interactive tutorials: https://guides.library.ucsc.edu/citesources/plagiarism

Purdue OWL - Research and Citation Resources: <https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/resources.html>

Middle Georgia State University Library Citation Guide: <https://www.mga.edu/library/citing.php>

A Guide to Ethical Writing: <https://ori.hhs.gov/content/avoiding-plagiarism-self-plagiarism-and-other-questionable-writing-practices-guide-ethical-writing>

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