

What to cite and why

WHAT

Always cite:

- When you use someone else's words or ideas
- Anything that you read in any format
- Anything presented or spoken, like speeches, lectures, personal interviews, performances, etc.
- Other works like films, music, song lyrics, data, programming code, etc. that are the intellectual property of others

Tips

STYLE

- Ask your instructor which citation style she prefers.
- If the instructor has no preference, choose a style and stick with it.
- A few styles to choose from are:
 - **APA:** American Psychological Association, often used in the social sciences
 - **Chicago/Turabian:** often used in the social sciences and humanities
 - **CBE:** Council of Biology Editors, often used in the life sciences
 - **MLA:** Modern Language Association, often used in the arts and humanities

HOW TO'S

- Use in-text citations such as parenthetical citations, footnotes, etc. to clearly distinguish your thoughts and words from those of others.
- Use complete citations at the end of your work.
- See the citation style format basics for APA, Chicago, and MLA on the *Bruin Success with Less Stress* Web site at <http://www.library.ucla.edu/b Bruinsuccess>.
- Always refer to the most recent edition of the citation style guide.

WHY

Citing your sources:

- Helps you avoid accusations of plagiarism
- Allows your readers to find your sources
- Provides evidence for your arguments and adds credibility
- Is an important part of the scholarly process, demonstrating that you are responding to this person, agreeing with that person, adding to what someone previously said, etc.

WRITING

- **Quoting:** Use the author's exact words. Quote when the original is difficult to rephrase or the original is so good that you want to preserve the language. Always enclose in "quotation marks" and cite it.
- **Summarizing:** Condense the original words/ideas without altering the meaning; basically, present the same information in a nutshell using your own words. Always cite it.
- **Paraphrasing:** Restate the author's words/ideas without altering the meaning. Paraphrases are usually about the same length as the original. Use your own words and always cite it.

TIME SAVERS AND OTHER TIPS

- Keep track of your citations as you research so you don't have to find them again later.
- Try bibliographic management software (e.g., Endnote, Zotero).
- Be sure to mark your notes as "quotes," "summaries," "paraphrases," or your own thoughts so you know what needs to be cited later.
- If you have a tutor, friend, etc., help edit your paper, be sure she's not "over-editing." Having someone rewrite entire passages or change your writing so much that it no longer reflects your original usually isn't okay.

WHAT ABOUT ONLINE SOURCES?

Always treat online sources as you would print or other sources. **Even if it's online, you must cite the source** if you used any of its words, ideas, statistics, data, etc.

ALWAYS

- Record the site's URL, the date it was "published," and the date that you accessed it as well as the author, title, sponsor, etc. You'll need this information for your complete citation.
- Try to use the best and most relevant sources for your research. Online sources are sometimes easier to access than print, but choose your sources based on quality and relevance rather than convenience.

NEVER

- Copy and paste anything without attributing the source.
- Find a paper online, or anywhere, and turn it in as your own. Obvious, but people get caught doing this all the time.