# Plagiarism

## What it is and how to avoid it

What is plagiarism?

# Plagiarism defined

Dictionary definition of "plagiarism" (from Merriam-Webster):

To steal and pass off (the ideas or words of another) as one's own: to use (another's production) without crediting the source

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# Plagiarism explained

- Can happen accidentally

- Applies even if you paraphrase

- Using other sources is good, as long as you cite them

- Citing sources shows which ideas are your own

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# Consequences of plagiarism

⚠️ Grade penalties

⚠️ Failing your course

⚠️ Disciplinary action

⚠️ Suspension or expulsion

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# How to avoid plagiarism

3 steps to follow

# Step 1: Keep track of your sources

- Keep a list of all the sources you consult

- Sources include websites, videos, magazines, etc.

- Note down sources just in case, even if you're not sure you'll use them

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# Details to write down

✓ Author name

✓ Source title

✓ Publication date

✓ Publisher

✓ Page numbers of specific quotes or passages

✓ URL or DOI for online sources

✓ Access date for online sources

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# Step 2: Quote or paraphrase

Two ways of sharing information from a source:

| Quoting | Paraphrasing |
| --- | --- |
| ✓ Copy the author's exact words | ✓ Put the text into your own words |
| ✓ Use quotation marks | ✓ No quotation marks |

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# Example of quoting

According to Darwin, "as natural selection acts solely by accumulating slight, successive, favourable variations, it can produce no great or sudden modification; it can act only by very short and slow steps" (1859, p. 510).

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# When to use quotes

✓    To give textual evidence

✓    To analyze language

✓    To give precise definitions

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# Example of paraphrasing

According to Darwin, natural selection is a gradual process that produces many small changes over time rather than sudden leaps (1859, p. 510).

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# When to paraphrase

✓ To share information

✓ To explain ideas

✓ To show your understanding of the source

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# Step 3: Cite the original source

- In-text citations briefly identify the source

- A reference list gives full source information

- Follow a consistent citation style (e.g. APA, MLA, Chicago)

- Online citation generators can help

# APA citation example

In-text citation:

> Recent research has shown that plagiarism is an increasingly widespread issue (Smith & Thomas, 2018, pp. 34–36).

Reference list entry:

> Smith, T. H., & Thomas, L. (2018). *New challenges in higher education*. Free Press.

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# How is plagiarism detected?

# Plagiarism checkers

- Used by universities to detect plagiarism

- Compares your document to a database of sources

- Detects text that is too similar to other sources

- Detects where citations are missing

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# Using a plagiarism checker yourself

- Check if you can download a plagiarism report when you submit your assignment
- If not, plagiarism checker services are available online
- Not all online plagiarism checkers are safe – make sure to use a reliable one

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# True or false?

1. You still need to cite your source even when you paraphrase.

2. Plagiarism is always deliberate.

3. Online sources do not need to be cited.

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# True or false?

1. You still need to cite your source even when you paraphrase.

   **TRUE:** Whether quoting or paraphrasing, you need a citation.

2. Plagiarism is always deliberate.

   **FALSE:** Many students plagiarize by accident.

3. Online sources do not need to be cited.

   **FALSE:** If you use online sources, you need to cite them too.

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# Recommended resources

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# Free Scribbr resources

- [Knowledge Base](#) (300+ articles)

- [YouTube Channel](#)

- [APA Citation Generator](#)

- [MLA Citation Generator](#)





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