CodeCite

This infographic is a draft compilation representing some key concerns in the area of code citations and code comments. It was created by Harold Sikkema in 2021. Please direct questions to harold.sikkema@sheridancollege.ca

Icons used in this infographic include icons from FontAwesome and custom artwork by Adriansyah, Adrien Coquet, Aenne Brielmann, Bjorn Andersson, Carlos Sarmento, and Grant Taylor and Symbolon from the thenounproject.com

Take credit for your own work

Students will only claim credit for their own ideas, writing, projects and creations.

Recognize & reference the work of others

Students will give proper recognition and reference:
- Where others have contributed
- Where non-original ideas have been included

Academic Citations

Add academic citations to a bibliography. Give properly formatted recognition to others whose ideas you have used. Submit together with your supporting process document in PDF format. You can find Style Guides for MLA and other common standards at the Sheridan Library

/* Code Comments */

Add inline comments to your code. Include URLs linking to relevant sources. Differentiate between your own work and that of others. Clarify where you have made adaptations to existing code. Provide helpful context.

Code comments have overlapping purposes:
-to establish academic integrity
-to follow professional practice
-to clarify personal goals

Let's Code!

My code is 100% original — Yes → Solo effort! Isn't it lonely? — Yes

No → Welcome to the coding community!

Online resources

(W3Schools, YouTube, MDN, Udemy)

I used online learning resources, documentation or tutorials — Yes →

Link to online learning resources in code comments. Explain your learning process.
/* Here I learned how to listen for clicks in JavaScript: w3schools.com/jsref/event_onclick.asp */

In your bibliography, add an entry to cite the resource.

No → Let's keep learning — Ok

Existing Code

I used existing code

Yes → I used an example given in class — Yes →

You do not have to explicitly cite code samples given in class, but it's still a good idea to clarify what you're doing in your comments
/* This section has been adapted from code shared in class during Week 9. I changed the button dimensions to fit my use case.*/

No → I used code from an online source — Yes →

(GitHub, OpenProcessing, CODEPEN)

Link to the existing code in code comments. Explain how you adapted it to fit your own vision. Differentiate clearly between the original code and your own iteration. Explain your adaptation in plain English to demonstrate understanding
/* Twinkling stars adapted from:
editor.p5js.org/wvnl/sketches/5wnuHAXKd
Star count adjusted below to reduce the number of iterations, and to contribute to a more minimal aesthetic. */
A simple URL and description is fine here, but it's a good idea to add details where possible. Consider including:
/* Title, Author(s), Date, Code version, URL, License (e.g. GPL, Creative Commons etc.) */

In your bibliography, add an entry to cite the code.

It's problematic to copy existing code in its entirety without any further adaptation or iteration. You must also demonstrate your own original vision. You can do this by modifying the code to suit a different goal, giving it a new context as part of something else, or by extending it in a new direction.

No → I modified or adapted the code — Yes ↓ / Ok

No → Let's keep learning

Important Notes

Academic Integrity in the classroom is not only about citing sources, but also demonstrating your learning process in a transparent way. Use code comments and supporting PDF documentation to validate your understanding. Show your reader that you know what you're doing.
/* I made a for loop to iterate over a list of people and display their name.*/

When learning code, you won't always know exactly what you're doing: and that's also part of the process! It's fine to use code that already exists, as long as you cite it properly, document your own iteration and/or adaptation of the code.
/* I don't know exactly how particle systems work but I'm grateful to Daniel Shiffman for making this one. I have adjusted the colour and size for my own needs. */

Don't assume that you must always make things from scratch: this is very rarely the case. Most of the time coding in community is preferable!
/* Show some love to your GitHub friends */

Happy Coding!

Frameworks & Libraries

(npm, React, Bootstrap)

I code with a framework or library

Yes →

Libraries and frameworks are a great way to streamline your work. They provide features or structures to build on top of. However, do be clear about your goals when using them. When including a script, accompany it with a comment explaining your intentions for it in your project.
<!-- Including Bootstrap to help with Layout -->
<link rel="stylesheet" href="bootstrap.min.css">

If the framework is serving a more general role, your comments about it can also remain general. If the project's very purpose is to learn the framework, you will likely need to cite further online resources/examples and explain your process line-by-line.
<!-- Bootstrap card component adapted from:
getbootstrap.com/docs/5.0/components/card/ -->

In your bibliography, add an entry to cite the framework / library

No → Let's keep learning — Ok

Helpful Humans

A human helped me — Yes → TA or peer mentor — Yes ↓

No → Let's keep learning

Another student in the same class — Yes ↓

Another student at Sheridan — No → A friend — Yes ↓

In your code comments, provide details about the help you received. Include context and clarify the scope of the help. Include the name and email of the person who helped you. Include any relevant URLs as well (e.g. if the person pointed you to resources)

/* I worked with Rachel (rachel.12345@sheridancollege.ca) on the sorting algorithm below. Rachel created the initial structure, and I adapted it for my own data. Rachel helped locate the code for this on stackoverflow.com/questions/6712034/ */

In your bibliography, add an entry to give credit for the support.

This is a weird grey area!
While informal input and creative exchange are encouraged, it's also vital that you communicate your learning process. This can be tricky when working with friends. Ideally they will be open to a citation, in which case you can welcome your friends into the academic community. If not, it becomes very hard to establish academic integrity. It becomes imperative here that you communicate your learning process and demonstrate your own understanding. To avoid the risk of having to re-do your project, check in with your professor first.