

## Plagiarism

The following handout is taken from the website of Duke University:  
The Thompson Writing Program: “Working with Sources: Avoiding Plagiarism.”

### A Useful Definition:

“From the Latin *plagiarius* (“kidnapper”), plagiarism refers to a form of intellectual theft.”

—Joseph Gibaldi,

MLA Style Manual and Guide to Scholarly Publishing.

2<sup>nd</sup> ed. New York: MLA, 1998: 151.

### What is Plagiarism? Breaking It Down:

Copying word for word from published sources without adequate documentation

Using language and/or ideas from sources without adequate documentation

Paraphrasing a source without attributing credit

### How to avoid plagiarism: Gathering research materials:

Allow time for gathering materials & reading.

Don’t wait till the last minute to write your paper.

Write down a citation for every source.

Have someone proofread your paper to see if he/she notices places where you fail to cite.

### Documenting sources:

You must cite direct quotations.

You must cite ideas that are not your own

You must cite facts that are not “common knowledge.”

You must cite all printed, audiovisual, electronic, and interview sources.

### What Is Common Knowledge?

Ask yourself two questions:

Did I know this information before I took this course?

Did this information/idea come from my own brain?

If the answer to either (or both) question is “No,” then the information is not “common knowledge” to you. You must cite. (From “The Writing Center” of UNC, Chapel Hill, on “Plagiarism.”)

### Definitions:

A quotation contains the exact words of the source and is indicated by quotation marks.

A summary gives an overview of the original ideas and is shorter than the original.

A paraphrase restates all the original material in different words and is about as long as the original.

### Advice for summarizing and paraphrasing:

After reading the text, write your paraphrase or summary without looking at the text, so you rely only on your memory.

Check your version with the original for content, accuracy, and mistakenly borrowed phrases.

Are phrases and sentence structures your own? If what you write is still too close to the original, try again, then cite.

### Advice for quoting directly:

Keep the author’s name near the quotation in your notes and in your paper. Double check quotations and page numbers for accuracy. Be sure that your quotations add punch to your paper and do not overwhelm it. Your paper is to be your own piece of work, not a string of quotations.

<http://twp.duke.edu/writing-studio/resources>