

Citations

Gens 176 - Spring 2026

How to get help

- Research Librarians - email, chat, in person
- COWs
- Or see me

Why do we cite?

- Allow your reader to locate your sources
- Give credibility to your argument
- Acknowledge work of others
- Avoid plagiarism

Plagiarism or Not Plagiarism?

Copying an entire post or article

- plagiarism

Submitting someone else's work as your own

- plagiarism

Misattributing a quote or idea to a wrong source

- plagiarism

Generally accepted facts or common knowledge

- not plagiarism

Stitching together paraphrases with no credit

- plagiarism

Reusing one of your own papers for another class

- plagiarism

Your lived experiences

- not plagiarism

Using a chart that you found in a journal article

- plagiarism

Missing key elements of source attribution

- plagiarism

Using ChatGPT to write a discussion post

- plagiarism

Ways to avoid plagiarism

Quotations:

... must be identical to the original, using a narrow segment of the source. They must match the source document word for word and must be attributed to the original author.

Ways to Avoid Plagiarism:

Paraphrasing

...puts the passage from source material into your own words. *A paraphrase must also be attributed to the original source.* Paraphrased material is usually shorter than the original passage, taking a somewhat broader segment of the source and condensing it slightly.

Ways to Avoid Plagiarism:

Summarizing involves putting the main idea(s) into your own words, including only the main point(s). Once again, it is necessary to attribute summarized ideas to the original source. Summaries are significantly shorter than the original and take a broad overview of the source material.

Ways to Avoid Plagiarism:

Each of these techniques should be credited to the original source. Golden rule: when in doubt, cite.

https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/using_research/quoting_paraphrasing_and_summarizing/index.html

Ways to avoid plagiarism - how citation works

Each citation style has different rules but generally we use:

- A signal phrase in the text, like “According to Chen Li...”
- An in-text citation (or parenthetical citation) will look like (Li, 2020) or (Li 7)
- A bibliographic citation will look like: Li, C. (2020). Best practices to avoid plagiarism. *Journal of Basic Writing*, 42(1), pp. 4-12.

According to Chen Li (2020), there are six best practices writers can use to avoid plagiarism. These include adopting note-taking habits that focus on attribution, learning about the citation style in question, and "understanding the *why* behind citation rules" to better apply them (pg. 7).

Reference

Li, C. (2020). Best practices to avoid plagiarism. *Journal of Basic Writing*, 42(1), pp. 4-12.

https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/avoiding_plagiarism/common-knowledge_attribution.html

Ways to avoid plagiarism - note taking

The Purdue OWL suggests:

- “Take notes with the same citation habits you would use in the paper. Use a signal phrase “According to [source],” at the beginning of your notes on a particular source, include in-text citations with page numbers any time you copy/paste or write a quote in from a source, and include a bibliographic citation immediately after the notes on a source end.
- If you have a lot of online sources such as journal articles in PDF format, use a PDF reader to write your notes on the source directly so they do not get disconnected from the original.”

https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/avoiding_plagiarism/best_practices.html