

Tips for Avoiding Plagiarism

- **Start early.** Give yourself time to digest the various sources, to confer with your instructor, and revise your draft.
- **Think about what you are reading and outline an argument that reflects the conclusions you are drawing.**
- **Develop the argument by giving information for and against your conclusions.**
- **Break large topics into smaller, more manageable ones.**
- **Write mainly in your own words. Always write your papers from scratch, starting with a blank screen.** *Do not succumb to the temptation to start with someone else's words and massage them into a paper.*
 - If you “cut and paste” make sure each passage is properly cited. If you are doing a lot of cutting and pasting you are not writing a very good paper.
 - If you are editing some words out of an original passage, rearranging the order, and using a thesaurus to look up synonyms for other words – you are not writing - you are assembling and you still must cite the original work.
- **Cite sources at the time of writing** instead of leaving it until the end. Use an online citation builder like: www.noodletools.com/login.php.
- **Knowing how and when to cite is your responsibility.** Make sure you are not applying a definition of plagiarism from another country.

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PLAGIARISM

***The act of presenting another's work or ideas
as your own***

Plagiarism is defined as the use of intellectual material produced by another person without acknowledging its source. You commit plagiarism when:

1. Using the views, opinions, or insights of another without acknowledgement.
2. Copying the writings or works of others into your academic assignment without crediting the original author, then submitting such work as your own. Be aware that even using a small phrase without quotation marks is considered plagiarism.
3. Paraphrasing the original phraseology without proper attribution.
4. Faking a reference or giving references to original sources without looking them up.
5. Changing the order of the original sentence or a few words or phrases without citing the source.

Why avoid Plagiarism?

Plagiarism, or the claiming of another's intellectual work as your own, is considered a major academic violation. At Santa Ana College this is addressed in the *Student Code of Conduct* where it states that to knowingly plagiarize can result in a failed grade and possibly more severe action. Plagiarizing is considered dishonest and invites faculty and future employers to question your integrity.

Ways to Avoid Plagiarism

Do's

- Do use your own ideas and words. Present the argument or point of view using your own distinctive voice, your original way of looking at things.
- Do give credit whenever you use another person's idea, opinion, theory, or interpretation.
- Do cite all statistics, graphs, charts, and quotations no matter where you find them.
- Do put the passage you are word-for-word-quoting in quotation marks. If the passage is more than 3 lines of text, start a new paragraph and indent, putting the citation at the end of the paragraph. *These are the only mechanisms for indicating quoted material.* Include others' thoughts to provide evidence that supports your argument.
- Do check with your instructor if you are unsure whether to cite information.
- Do take care when printing, downloading, and emailing sources.
- Do make clear the way you are using the source. As you take notes, distinguish between paraphrases and direct quotations.
- Do check a citation guide or style manual such as the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers (LB 2369 G53 2009)* or the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (BF 76.7 P83 2010)* for specific rules regarding the documentation of resources.
- Do use an online citation builder like Noodle Tools: www.noodletools.com/login.php
- Do ask the staff at the SAC Writing Center D110 to review your writing. Call them at 714-564-6578 for current hours.

Don'ts

- Don't buy, steal, or borrow a paper or test, then submit it as your own work.
- Don't re-submit or reuse a paper that you wrote for another class.
- Don't make up fake sources, quotes, interpretations, or interviews.
- Don't hire or ask someone else to write or rewrite your paper.
- Don't overwhelm your paper with outside sources. Pretty soon your paper looks like a field of quotation marks. This does not represent very much intellectual work on your part.
- Don't think that your instructor won't recognize the sudden change in your writing style.
- Don't think that because something is on the Internet it doesn't need to be cited or referenced in your paper.
- Don't "cut and paste" materials from the Internet or other electronic sources into your paper without acknowledging where the information came from.
- Don't quote or paraphrase from another source without crediting the original author.
- Don't procrastinate on assignments so that you are under time-pressure and become tempted to take shortcuts.
- Don't be afraid to confer with your instructor.