



## HOW TO AVOIDANCE OF PLAGIARISM

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**Annotation:** *This article offers a relaxed, step-by-step look at plagiarism—what it is, why it matters, and how to steer clear of it without stress. It covers everything from really understanding sources to simple citation tricks and time-management hacks. Perfect for high-school or college students, bloggers, content creators, and anyone who writes at work or for fun. By the end, you'll see that avoiding plagiarism is less about rigid rules and more about respecting ideas—both yours and others'—and building confidence in your own voice.*

**Keywords:** *Plagiarism; academic honesty; paraphrasing; quoting; citation practices; originality; writing strategies; plagiarism detectors; source management; self-plagiarism; informal writing*

**What is plagiarism?** In the simplest terms, it's using someone else's words or ideas without giving them proper credit. But it comes in sneaky forms: changing a few words here and there (still plagiarism), re-using your own past paper (yes, that's plagiarism too), or forgetting to wrap a quote in quotation marks (guilty as charged).

The good news, dodging plagiarism doesn't require you to become a citation wizard or a walking style guide. With a handful of friendly habits—reading actively, jotting clear notes, paraphrasing well, and checking your work—you'll not only avoid trouble but also become a stronger, more authentic writer. Let's dive in.



## What Counts as Plagiarism?

Plagiarism happens whenever you present another's intellectual property—words, data, images, or ideas—as your own. Even accidental slips count. Here is the lowdown on the common types:

- Direct plagiarism: Copying text verbatim, sentence after sentence, without quotation marks or a reference.
- Paraphrasing plagiarism: Tweaking a few words but keeping the original structure and meaning, without crediting the source.
- Self-plagiarism: Re-submitting your own previous work as if it were new. In many academic settings, that's a no-no.
- Mosaic plagiarism: Stitching together phrases from different sources into one paragraph without proper citations.
- Accidental plagiarism: Forgetting to cite, misquoting, or misattributing a source. "I didn't mean to!" does not usually fly.

Why it matters: institutions treat plagiarism seriously—think failing assignments, formal reprimands, or even expulsion. In the workplace, it can cost you credibility or legal headaches. Beyond penalties, plagiarism cheats you out of genuine learning. When you wrestle with ideas and turn them into your own, you actually understand the material better.

## Managing Sources and Notes

Most plagiarism starts with messy research. You scroll, copy, paste—bam, everything's a jumble. To keep things tidy:

- Build a simple source log: Create a document or spreadsheet. For each source, jot



author, title, date, URL (or page number), and a one-line summary of the key point you plan to use.

- Label quotes vs. paraphrases: Whenever you copy a snippet, wrap it in quotation marks and mark “[QUOTE]” next to it. That way you never mix up original text and your own rewrites.

- Use folders or tags: Whether in Zotero, Mendeley, or even browser bookmarks, organize sources by topic or chapter so you can easily trace them back.

By taking five minutes upfront to set up your system, you’ll save hours later and slash the risk of accidental slip-ups.

### **Paraphrasing Like a Pro**

Paraphrasing is your best friend—it lets you convey ideas in your own voice while still crediting the original thinker. But shallow paraphrasing (just swapping words) still counts as plagiarism. Here’s how to nail it:

1. Read, then close the source: Make sure you really get the idea.
2. Write from memory: Jot down the concept in bullet points.
3. Explain aloud: Pretend you’re teaching it to a friend—use your natural phrasing.
4. Compare and refine: Check back against the source to ensure you didn’t accidentally echo the original structure or unique phrases.
5. Cite: Even though the words are yours, the idea isn’t. Add a brief in-text citation (e.g., “According to Smith (2023)...”).

Example original:

“Half of all college students admit to plagiarizing at least once,” writes researcher Jane Smith.



Paraphrase:

Research shows that at least fifty percent of undergraduates have confessed to using someone else's work without proper attribution (Smith, 2023).

### Quoting and Citing Correctly

Sometimes, you want the punch of an author's exact phrasing—especially for definitions or particularly vivid language. In those cases:

- Use quotation marks: Open and close with “ ” around the exact text.
- Attribute immediately: Lead in with the author's name or follow with a parenthetical.

> As Johnson (2021) notes, “Creative thinking flourishes in environments that embrace failure.”

- Limit block quotes: Longer than 40 words? Format as a block quote (indented, no quotation marks). But use them sparingly—too many can break your own narrative flow.

- Match citation style: Whether it's APA, MLA, Chicago, or your workplace's house style, follow its rules for punctuation, italics, and ordering. If you're writing informally, a consistent “According to X...” approach still keeps you honest.

### Plagiarism Checkers & Writing Aids

A quick scan with an online checker can catch stray matches you missed. Popular picks:

- Turnitin (institutional)
- Grammarly (built-in checker)
- Quetext, SmallSEOTools, Scribbr

Use them as a second pair of eyes—never rely solely on them. They may flag common phrases or miss cleverly paraphrased content.



Bonus writing aids:

- Reference managers (Zotero, Mendeley) automate bibliographies.
- Note-taking apps (Notion, Evernote) to tag and summarize sources.
- Pomodoro timers to keep research and writing sessions focused, avoiding last-minute panic.

### **Time Management**

Procrastination is plagiarism's best friend. When you're crunched, shortcuts look oh so tempting. Combat it with:

- Backward planning: Start from the due date and map out mini-deadlines—topic selection, research, first draft, revision, reference check.
- Chunking: Break big tasks into 20- to 30-minute sprints. Focus on one section at a time.
- Accountability buddy: Pair up with a friend or colleague—check in on each other's progress.

Even a little progress each day keeps you confident and gives you time to polish citations, refine paraphrases, and run another plagiarism check.

### **Conclusion**

Avoiding plagiarism boils down to respect—respect for the work of others and respect for your own growth as a writer. When you embrace good habits—taking clear notes, paraphrasing well, quoting accurately, using checkers, and managing time—you build stronger arguments and a voice that truly reflects you. Yes, it takes extra minutes upfront, but it pays off in stress saved, integrity preserved, and skills sharpened.



Next time you sit down to write, remember: the research is your foundation, but the house you build is uniquely yours. Give credit where it's due, own your own insights, and let your authentic voice shine. That's how you not only avoid plagiarism, but also become the kind of writer—and person—others can trust and respect.

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