Plagiarism
All you need to know
Definition

“Literary theft. Plagiarism occurs when a writer duplicates another writer's language or ideas and then calls the work his or her own. To avoid the charge of plagiarism, writers take care to credit those from whom they borrow and quote.”

Who Commits It?

Everyone! Students, musicians, artists, teachers, writers—the list goes on and on in terms of individuals who plagiarize.
Why does it happen?

While some individuals know that what they are doing is plagiarism, others are plagiarizing unintentionally. A common reason for plagiarism on the part of college students is often a result of bad note taking as in careless research and writing. Failing to cite sources properly may be considered plagiarism.
Tip #1

When doing research always take good notes. If copying any quotes from a book or article be sure to use quotations (so you know what is someone else’s words) and list all of the bibliographic information (title, author, year of publication, etc) alongside of it. Don’t always rely on being able to find the particular quotation again later on.
Types of plagiarism

Plagiarism comes in many different forms but here is a list of some of them:

- Presenting published or unpublished works prepared by others as your own, including papers purchased or borrowed from any person or organization.

- Using formal lecture notes in your own work without attributing the original source & presenting them as your own.

- Using the ideas, and/or speculations, and/or language of any person or persons, without proper citing, and presenting this as one’s own work.
Watch out!

Changing around the words of the original source is still considered plagiarism. If you are still using the original idea and have not properly cited it you’re still plagiarizing even if you’ve changed all of the wording.
Examples of plagiarism

Example #1

The original text
“Accepting criticism is not always easy, and not all reviewers will be tactful. For your purposes, though, try to listen with an open mind. You then will need to decide which remarks seem valid and which recommendations are workable.”


The plagiarized text
“It’s tough to accept criticism, and not everyone who reviews your work will be polite. Try to accept what they’re saying. It’s up to you to determine which remarks are legitimate and which remarks you can incorporate. “
Why is it plagiarism?

While the words and phrases have been changed around, the idea of the original text is still being used and is not being properly cited making it seem like the person who is plagiarizing wrote the paragraph.
Plagiarism examples continued

Example #2

The original text
“They faced a ticking clock, as the enemy vowed to destroy these treasures rather than surrender them and the Russian allies were determined to claim any captured artworks as reparations.”


The plagiarized text
Lally (2014) explains that they faced a ticking clock, as the enemy vowed to destroy these treasures rather than surrender them and the Russian allies were determined to claim any captured artworks as reparations.
Why is it plagiarism?

Although the author was cited, the failure to enclose the direct quote with quotation marks makes it seem as if the person had written it.
Plagiarism examples continued

Example #3

The original text
“The greatest power of the photograph, its straightforward truthfulness, has been lost forever. Before the computer era, people believed that the photograph in front of them was a truthful representation of reality. No more, thanks to Photoshop and digital editing.”


Properly used in a paper
Misha Gordin said that because of things like Photoshop and digital editing, a photograph’s inability to lie is now a thing of the past.
Why is it not plagiarism?

The author is mentioned at the start of the sentence so it is immediately clear to the reader that it is not the writer’s original statement even though the writer paraphrased the original text.
Tip #2

When in doubt-cite!

If you’re ever unsure on whether or not you should cite something, do. It’s always better to be cautious then be accused of plagiarism.
Fact vs. Opinion

If something is common knowledge, this would be considered a fact.

Example-Washington D.C. is the capital of the United States.

Since this is a fact you would not need to cite this.
Fact vs. Opinion (continued)

If something is an original idea and opinion that is not your own, you do need to cite and give proper credit.

Example-Crime was rampant in Washington D.C. during the 1980s.

Since this is a personal opinion, if you were to include the above quote in a paper you would need to properly attribute it to the individual that had said/written it.
Paraphrasing

*noun* a restatement of something using different words, especially in order to clarify; a re-wording or re-phrasing.

*verb* (paraphrased, paraphrasing) to express something in other words.

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*NOTE: Citations shown in this guide are in MLA format*