

Avoiding Plagiarism

Scholarly research and progress are based on the proper use of other people's ideas and written work. Ideas and concepts are built on others' works, but scholars must attribute the proper credit to the person who came up with that idea. Taking the intellectual property of another person and gaining an unearned benefit without giving credit to them is plagiarism. Plagiarism is the improper use (**stealing**) of words, phrases or ideas. The scholars who came before you must be acknowledged and credit must be given to them through references and citations. Your proper use of references and citations displays your skill as a researcher and depth of knowledge of your subject.

Radford University takes plagiarism very seriously. It is up to you to know what constitutes plagiarism; you are an adult and claims of ignorance will not serve as an excuse.

Types of Plagiarism include:

- Turning in someone else's work as your own.
- Directly quoting another source without quotation marks or footnotes.
- Paraphrasing, restating, and summarizing of someone else's words without giving the original creator credit.
- Using images, video or audio clips, or software downloaded from the Internet.

Deciding when to cite information:

- Is the idea and thought your own? No citation necessary.
- Did you put someone else's ideas into your own words? Cite it.
- Is the information common knowledge? No citation necessary.
- Did you learn this information from a book, article or Web site? Cite it.

Steps to avoid plagiarism

- Use quotation marks when using another's exact words.
- When paraphrasing another writer's words, indicate in a note where you found the information.
- Include a works cited page at the end of your paper that lists all of the outside sources consulted in doing your research.