

RulesWhyWhatExamples: PlagiarismHow to referenceReferences**PLAGIARISM and REFERENCE FORMAT****Rules**

At the University of Toronto, as at all other universities, it is an offense "to represent as one's own any idea or expression of an idea or work of another in any academic examination or term test or in connection with any other form of academic work, i.e., to commit plagiarism" (*Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters*, <http://www.utm.utoronto.ca/regcal/WEBGEN124.html>).

Information on plagiarism is readily available on campus and you will probably be cautioned against such dishonesty in several courses. As a student of the University, you are subject to its code of behaviour and student conduct: you accepted those codes when you chose to attend UofT. Possessing unauthorized aids, personating someone else, representing someone else's work as one's own, buying essays, submitting papers for credit twice, concocting sources, are all severe academic offenses. These offenses are dealt with by the Tribunal of the University, represented by your division's Dean. It is your responsibility to be aware of University regulations. Ignorance of them is not an excuse for improper behaviour.

You will get credit only for your own work -- not for the work of others. An essay bought from a web site, "farmed out" to or copied in part or entirely from another student, or copied from books or online documents, is likely to land you in a lot of trouble. Contrary to what many think, plagiarism is usually very easy to detect. A plagiarized assignment may well take up more of your time than doing the required work in the first place, once you factor in the hours wasted in meetings, the embarrassment, anxiety, and aggravation, and the usual grade of zero awarded to plagiarized work. You will certainly reap no academic benefit from it. Besides the effective sanctions, going through a hearing of the University Tribunal is a tedious and unnerving process.

The lightest penalty is a grade of zero for the plagiarized item, but further grade penalties, failure of the whole course, and even academic warnings or suspensions are also likely. Do not expect "leniency" from your instructors, as they are also bound by the *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters*, which specifies that is also an offense for instructors to approve and evaluate work that may be legitimately suspected of plagiarism. Individual situations (why plagiarism was committed, various pressures...) are not grounds for leniency -- cases are judged on evidence. There is plagiarism, or there is no plagiarism and it is obvious and easy to see which way it goes on the assignments you provide.

Why is it necessary to reference sources?

The work you undertake in the University requires you to acquaint yourself with a topic you are studying, and then to demonstrate how much and how well you have studied, worked and thought. It is the whole idea of "credit". Locating, choosing, and using sources are important ways of demonstrating your knowledge and showcase the amount of work you have carried out. Acknowledging your references shows that you have done significant intellectual work by reading about the topic and understanding what other researchers had to say. A solid bibliography and appropriate quotes establish your credentials to speak about a topic. When you must cite the sources you have used and give credit to the authors you have read and who have helped you form your own opinion., it is credit to you.

Identifying the material you used serves two more functions. It is a courtesy to your reader, who might be interested in pursuing your line of thought. In such cases, you will often receive credit for providing insightful documentation and making worthwhile connections with existing literature. It is an equally important courtesy to the authors themselves, and an acknowledgment of their own time and effort; in fact they have legal rights to their ideas, in the same way that we all enjoy rights over the things we own. Referencing sources is standard practice in a community of scholars. You will be recognized as a worthy student by adopting the same practices as your professors. It is how you will learn and develop as a student. As [a site](#) says, "Plagiarizing a paper is like sending a friend to practice tennis for you -- you'll never score an ace yourself! "

[Back to top of the page](#)

What should I reference?

Language -- Phrases, expressions, original or specialized words, whole sentences, whole paragraphs, or sections of paragraphs. If you find yourself copying or cutting and pasting more than a couple of words, it is absolutely necessary that you indicate the source explicitly and precisely: the quoted words must be recognizable as a quotation, which means (1) quotation marks to delimit the words that are not your own, (2) reference, (3) bibliography (*see format below*).

Ideas -- Even when you do not quote directly from another author's work but instead offer your own paraphrase, you must still give the author credit by including the work in your bibliography. Your use of someone else's ideas or examples has to be documented by an appropriate parenthetical note following the text where you express or reword the idea coined by a third party.

Statistics -- Tables, numbers and data from surveys and statistics have to be referenced. It is quite evident that you did not personally conduct extensive surveys or opinion polls, or content analyses of material on the WWW. If the numbers come from a secondary source or are relayed from a third party, like a newspaper or a magazine, you must still mention the source where *you* found the statistics.

Pictures -- Illustrations, clipart, still shots, reproductions of artwork, charts, photographs, images. The source, online or in print, must be given as fully as possible.

Knowledge and influences-- If reading a source has somehow contributed to the ideas you have formed about the topic, even if you do not directly refer to any sentence written by that author or use a specific idea expressed by that author, you must mention the work in the bibliography.

[Back to top of the page](#)

What if I don't acknowledge my sources?

If you do not reference your sources, you are guilty of committing plagiarism.

One exception, however: it is not necessary to reference common knowledge (John F. Kennedy was assassinated in 1963, Gutenberg invented the printing press, the World Wide Web is a complex set of interrelated multimedia documents...).

[Back to top of the page](#)

How many sources are required?

You need to reference *all* the sources you quote from, whose ideas you use, etc. as stated above.

Your paper should have *mostly words that are written by you* and that constitute your own way of debating the topic. A paper is not a collage of quotations pasted along the lines of the various points you need to raise. If you find that your paper is made from more than 30% of quoted material, you are probably not aware of how an academic paper is written. If you find yourself mostly mimicking, parroting, repeating (=quoting) all the authors you have used, you probably have not developed a deep or detailed enough understanding of the topic, you probably haven't synthesized enough to go beyond repetition. Remember that you are not collecting nuggets or pearls of wisdom -- you are writing a coherent, argued, and organized answer to a topic, and doing so in a way that presents your own perspective on the topic, **with references** that allow your reader to see where you stand compared to others and how deeply you think about commonly held ideas on the topic. It is difficult to imagine that you will be able to integrate more than five distinct sources per page of your development.

On the other hand, a paper with no source integrated is probably not sufficiently grounded on common thinking about the topic. A paper that only or mostly relies on required textbooks signals equally strongly a lack of research. It is wishful thinking to expect the best grades by doing the very rockbottom least. It is therefore reasonable to assume that for a very short paper having two or three different sources (books, articles, online publications from a researcher or a scholarly periodical...) is both sufficient to conduct a well-rounded argument and not too many that it will clutter your paper and make your own presentation of ideas secondary.

In the same vein, if you find yourself just aiming to reach the magic number of, say, five sources, you are probably not well aware of what an academic paper is.

The number of different sources you use makes no supposition about the number of individual notes you will need to acknowledge them by. A solid well-known 600-page book about a topic may be quoted ten times or once, for instance. In all cases you will need acknowledgments as many times as you quote or paraphrase (=reword) the source.

[Back to top of the page](#)

Why essay mills do not work

As you can imagine, entrepreneurs who have chosen to help cheaters are not the most honest people... So it is unreasonable to expect a lot from them, especially if you find yourself accused of plagiarism. Having bought a paper does not excuse or absolve you from the charge of plagiarism.

The papers sold by essay mills had to be written. Whether they hire their own researchers-writers to custom-write a paper, or whether they simply recycle papers they already have in their database, essay mills have to come up with essays fast. So in many cases they themselves turn to the web and at times "forget" to reference material properly. Their oversight or ignorance or plain laziness is susceptible to land you in a charge of plagiarism.

Essay mills often need to advertise the essays they offer for profit. So they need to provide samples to potential buyers. Unfortunately, such samples turn up in online search engines...

Essay mills also recycle papers, buying them from students and selling them to new buyers as many times as they can. Quite often they also turn up in search engines for that matter, as both buyers and sellers are likely to post written essays online (for promotion or to meet term work requirements). A lot of search engines "cache" material posted online, even if it was only public for a few days.

Aye, there's the rub! and it's called Internet. By the way, some plagiarists still seem to think that it is much safer to plagiarize books, as they do not turn up on search engines. Unfortunately books are also quoted online -- and much more frequently than you think -- if it was good enough to use for you, how can you be sure it wasn't good enough for ten or twenty other writers to use it on their web page? Whole books are now put online, literally thousands of periodicals are now fully archived on the web in electronic form. The University of Toronto Library *alone* has digitized more than 670,992 book titles and more than 63,077 serial issues. To compare, the UTM library holds 660,000 print titles, many of which are counted in the digitized collection.

The assignments you will have to complete in FRE 180Y are very specific and require a specific answer.

It is highly likely that a generic paper about another topic or one resembling closely FRE 180Y's will result in a failing grade. Don't waste your money, just do the work.

[Back to top of the page](#)

What does plagiarism look like? (and why it is so easy to notice)

Plagiarism is as plain to see as a person with no head. It is the missing parts that you notice the most.

Examples

Student text	Is it plagiarism?	How to fix it <small>[necessary additions are in red]</small>
<p>[...] The Internet and Transmission Control Protocols were initially developed in 1973 by American computer scientist Vinton Cerf as part of a project sponsored by the United States Department of Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (ARPA) and directed by American engineer Robert Kahn. [...] <i>No bibliography</i></p>	<p>Yes. It presents someone else's work as the student's.</p>	<p>[...] "The Internet and Transmission Control Protocols were initially developed in 1973 by American computer scientist Vinton Cerf as part of a project sponsored by the United States Department of Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (ARPA) and directed by American engineer Robert Kahn." (Encarta). [...] BIBLIOGRAPHY ----. "Internet", in <i>Microsoft Encarta 97 Encyclopedia</i>. Deluxe edition, 2 CD. CD-ROM. Redmond: Microsoft, 1993-1996.</p>
Student text	Is it plagiarism?	How to fix it <small>[necessary additions are in red]</small>
<p>[...] Researchers have observed that a personal home page can also promote an increased focus on the self and a heightened, and perhaps exaggerated, sense that others are watching us with interest. [...] BIBLIOGRAPHY: WALLACE, Patricia (1999). <i>The Psychology of the Internet</i>. Cambridge: Cambridge UP.</p>	<p>Yes. Credit is not given to the author for her actual words.</p>	<p>[...] Patricia Wallace has observed that "a personal home page [...] can also promote an increased focus on the self and a heightened, and perhaps exaggerated, sense that others are watching us with interest" (Wallace 1999, 34). [...] BIBLIOGRAPHY: WALLACE, Patricia (1999). <i>The Psychology of the Internet</i>. Cambridge: Cambridge UP.</p>
Student text	Is it plagiarism?	How to fix it <small>[necessary additions are in red]</small>
<p>[...] Patricia Wallace has observed that a personal home page can also promote an increased focus on the self and a heightened, and perhaps exaggerated, sense that others are watching us with interest (Wallace). [...] BIBLIOGRAPHY: WALLACE, Patricia (1999). <i>The Psychology of the Internet</i>. Cambridge: Cambridge UP.</p>	<p>Yes. Proper credit is not given to the author for her words.</p>	<p>[...] Patricia Wallace has observed that "a personal home page [...] can also promote an increased focus on the self and a heightened, and perhaps exaggerated, sense that others are watching us with interest" (Wallace 1999, 34). [...] BIBLIOGRAPHY: WALLACE, Patricia (1999). <i>The Psychology of the Internet</i>. Cambridge: Cambridge UP.</p>
Student text	Is it plagiarism?	How to fix it <small>[necessary additions are in red]</small>
<p>[...] Publishers of personal home pages derive an increased sense of self from their web pages, and sometimes act under the impression that they receive more attention. [...] BIBLIOGRAPHY: WALLACE, Patricia (1999). <i>The Psychology of the Internet</i>. Cambridge: Cambridge UP.</p>	<p>Yes. Credit is not given to the author for her idea.</p>	<p>[...] Publishers of personal home pages derive an increased sense of self from their web pages, and sometimes act under the impression that they receive more attention (Wallace 1999, 34). [...] BIBLIOGRAPHY: WALLACE, Patricia (1999). <i>The Psychology of the Internet</i>. Cambridge: Cambridge UP.</p>
Student text	Is it plagiarism?	How to fix it <small>[necessary additions are in red]</small>
<p>[...] Only 52 percent of web pages are actually in English. [...] <i>No bibliography</i></p>	<p>Yes. Credit is not given to the person (or entity) who gathered the statistics. Obviously the student didn't count all the pages on the WWW...</p>	<p>[...] Only 52 percent of web pages are actually in English (Media Awareness Network 2001). [...] BIBLIOGRAPHY: Media Awareness Network (2001). "Media Usage: Computers and the Internet". Online at: http://www.media-awareness.ca/eng/issues/stats/usenet2001.htm, consulted on November 16th, 2001.</p>

[Back to top of the page](#)

REFERENCE FORMAT in FRE 180Y

How do I reference my sources?

You must use parenthetical notes throughout your paper and a final bibliography. Use the same style consistently throughout your paper.

Final bibliographical entries should provide at least (format, i.e. italic, quotation marks, punctuation, capitalization..., provided in the table cells). For those to whom it means something, FRE 180Y uses a very simplified new MLA format. The basic rule is that bibliographical entries must provide at least three fields, separated by full stops: (1) the author's name, (2) the title information, (3) the publication information.

Books

- AUTHOR, Author's first name (YEAR).
- *Book Title*. Edition if applicable.
- Place of publication: publisher.

Articles

- AUTHOR, Author's first name (YEAR).
- "Title of Article",
- *Title of Journal or Magazine*, volume, number (date of periodical), page numbers.

Online material

- AUTHOR, Author's first name (YEAR).
- *Web Site Name*.
- Online at: <http://...>, consulted on Month day, year.

Other material

- AUTHOR, Author's first name (YEAR).
- *Piece Title*.
- Format of material.
- Place of publication: publisher.
- Date of access.

Parenthetical notes throughout your paper include the author's name followed by the year, a comma, and a specific page number if applicable. **Quotations from an original print source must be clearly indicated by quotation marks (or a different margin width for quotations longer than three lines), followed by a parenthetical reference that provides page numbers in the source. Quotations from an original online source must also be clearly indicated by quotation marks, followed by a parenthetical reference. In both cases the full details for the source are provided in the bibliography.** If you mention the author's name in your own discourse, it becomes unnecessary to repeat it in the parenthetical note. If you refer to a whole item, without using its wording, it is not necessary to mention page numbers in the parenthetical note.

Footnotes should be reserved for cursive comments.

Examples:

Check out what a standard bibliography looks like in the course outline.

Types of Publication

A book	
IN YOUR TEXT: "Films began to use larger screens for better image quality" (Straubhaar and LaRose 2001, 194).	IN YOUR BIBLIOGRAPHY: STRAUBHAAR, Joseph and Robert LaROSE (2001). <i>Media Now. Communications Media in the Information Age</i> . 3rd Edition. Belmont: Wadsworth/Thompson Learning.
An article or a chapter in a collection	
IN YOUR TEXT: McCombs has provided a short but informative survey of agenda-setting theory (1981).	IN YOUR BIBLIOGRAPHY: McCOMBS, Maxwell E. (1981). "The Agenda-Setting Approach", in <i>Handbook of Political Communication</i> . Edited by Dan D. Nimoro and Keith R. Sanders. Newbury Park: Sage Publishing, p.121-140.
An article in a periodical	
IN YOUR TEXT: McCombs and Shaw have stated the basic tenet of agenda-setting theory: "We judge as important what the media judges as important" (1972, 181).	IN YOUR BIBLIOGRAPHY: McCOMBS, Maxwell E. and Donald L. SHAW (1972). "The Agenda-Setting Function of Mass Media", <i>Public Opinion Quarterly</i> , nÂ° 36, p.176-187.
An online article	
IN YOUR TEXT: The context of mass communication has evolved significantly in the past decade or so (Ruggles 1998)	IN YOUR BIBLIOGRAPHY: RUGGLES, Myles A (1998). "What Kind of Global Culture: Mass Communication Research in a Changing Context", <i>Canadian Journal of Communication</i> , vol. 23, nÂ° 2 (Spring 1998). Online at: < http://cjc-online.ca/title.php3?page=8&journal_id=30&document=1 >, consulted on October 30th, 2002.
An online document	
IN YOUR TEXT: "One role of a free press in a democratic society is ostensibly to provide the public with information necessary for them to take part in governing	IN YOUR BIBLIOGRAPHY: ROBINSON, Scott P. [1998]. <i>Media-Agenda-Setting</i> . Online at: < http://www.niu.edu/newsplace/agenda.html >.

themselves" (Robinson 1998).

consulted on November 6th, 2001.

An online document with a corporate or institutional author

IN YOUR TEXT:

Microsoft has developed a rather grand vision by which it seeks "to empower people through great software" (Microsoft Corporation 2001).

IN YOUR BIBLIOGRAPHY:

Microsoft Corporation (2001). *Microsoft Corporate Information*. Online at: <http://www.microsoft.com/mscorp/>, consulted on November 18th, 2001.

If you are in doubt about any of the points raised in this document, it is your responsibility to ask questions and get your doubts cleared.

[Back to top of the page](#)

FURTHER REFERENCES

Here are a few interesting resources on plagiarism and referencing:

PROCTER, Margaret (2002). "How Not to Plagiarize". Online at:

<http://www.utoronto.ca/writing/plagsep.html>

A popular University of Toronto resource offered by the Coordinator of the University's Writing Support. It links to a full-fledged description of note formats.

RODGERS, John (1996). *Plagiarism and the Art of Skillful Citation*. Online at:

<http://www.bcm.tmc.edu/immuno/citewell/>

By far the fullest and most descriptive online site about plagiarism.

Writing Tutorial Services, Indiana University [2002]. "Plagiarism: What It is and How to Recognize and Avoid It". Online at:

<http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/wts/plagiarism.html>

Purdue University Online Writing Lab (2002). "Avoiding Plagiarism". Online at:

http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/research/r_plagiar.html

MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers

<http://www.mla.org/>

[Back to top of the page](#)

HOW NOT TO PLAGIARIZE

From the Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters:

It shall be an offence for a student knowingly:

(d) to represent as one's own any idea or expression of an idea or work of another in any academic examination or term test or in connection with any other form of academic work, i.e. to commit plagiarism.

Wherever in the Code an offence is described as depending on "knowing", the offence shall likewise be deemed to have been committed if the person ought reasonably to have known.

You've already heard the warnings about plagiarism. Obviously it's against the rules to buy essays or copy from your friends' homework, and it's also plagiarism to borrow passages from books or articles or websites without identifying them. You know that the purpose of any paper is to show your own thinking, not create a patchwork of borrowed ideas. But you may still be wondering how you're supposed to give proper references to all the reading you've done and all the ideas you've encountered.

The point of documenting sources in academic papers is not just to avoid unpleasant visits to the Dean's office, but to demonstrate that you know what is going on in your field of study. Get credit for having done your reading! Precise documentation is also a courtesy to your readers because it lets them look at the material you've found. That's especially important for Internet sources.

The different systems for typing up references are admittedly a nuisance. See the handout "Standard Documentation Formats" for an overview. But the real challenge is establishing the relationship of your thinking to the reading you've done. Here are some common questions and basic answers.

1. ***Can't I avoid problems just by listing every source in the reference list?***

No, you need to integrate your acknowledgements into your own writing. Give the reference as soon as you've mentioned the idea you're using, not just at the end of the paragraph. It's often a good idea to name the authors ("X states" and "Y argues against X") and then indicate your own stand ("A more inclusive perspective, however, . . ."). The examples on the next page demonstrate various wordings for doing this. Have a look at journal articles in your discipline to see how experts refer to their sources.

2. ***If I put the ideas into my own words, do I still have to clog up my pages with all those names and numbers?***

Sorry—yes, you do. In academic papers, you need to keep mentioning authors and pages and dates to show how your ideas are related to those of the experts. It's sensible to use your own words because that saves space and lets you connect ideas smoothly. But whether you quote a passage directly in quotation marks, paraphrase it closely in your own words, or just summarize it rapidly, you need to identify the source then and there. (That applies to Internet sources too: you still need author and date as well as title and URL. The handout "Standard Documentation Formats" gives examples for a range of types.)

3. ***But I didn't know anything about the subject until I started this paper. Do I have to give an acknowledgement for every point I make?***

You're safer to over-reference than to skimp. But you can cut down the clutter by recognizing that some ideas are "common knowledge" in the field—that is, taken for granted by people knowledgeable about the topic. Facts easily found in standard reference books are considered common knowledge: the date of the Armistice for World War I, for example, or the present population of Canada. You don't need to name a specific source for them, even if you learned them only when doing your research. They're easily verified and not likely to be controversial. In some disciplines, information covered in class lectures doesn't need acknowledgement. Some interpretive ideas may also be so well accepted that you don't need to name a specific source: that Picasso is a distinguished modernist painter, for instance, or that smoking is harmful to health. Check with your professor or TA if you're in doubt whether a specific point is considered common knowledge in your field.

4. ***How can I tell what's my own idea and what has come from somebody else?***

Careful record-keeping helps. Always write down the author, title and publication information (including the URL and other identifying information for web pages) so you can attach names and dates to specific ideas. Taking good notes is also essential. Don't paste passages from web sources into your draft: that's asking for trouble. As you read any text—online or hard-copy—summarize useful points in your own words. If you record a distinctive phrase or sentence you might want to quote, put quotation marks around it in your notes to remind yourself that you're copying the author's exact words. And make a deliberate effort as you read to notice connections among ideas, especially contrasts and disagreements, and to jot down questions or thoughts of your own. If you find as you write that you're following one or two of your sources too closely, deliberately look back in your notes for other sources that take different views; then write about the differences and why they exist.

5. ***So what exactly do I have to document?***

With experience reading academic prose, you'll soon get used to the ways writers in your field refer to their sources. Here are the main times you should give acknowledgements. (You'll notice many different formats in the following examples; see the sheet "Standard Documentation Formats" for advice on these systems.)

a. Quotations, paraphrases, or summaries:

If you use the author's exact words, enclose them in quotation marks, or indent passages of more than four lines. But it's seldom worthwhile to use long quotations. In literary studies, quote a few words at a time and comment on them. In other disciplines, quote only when the original words are especially memorable. In most cases, use your own words to summarize the idea you want to discuss, emphasizing the points relevant to your argument. Be sure to name sources even when you are not using the exact original words. As in the examples below, it's often a good idea to mention the author's name. That gains you some reflected authority and indicates where the borrowing starts and stops.

e.g. As Morris puts it in *The Human Zoo* (1983), "we can always be sure that today's daring innovation will be tomorrow's respectability" (p. 189). [APA system]

e.g. Northrop Frye discusses comedy in terms of the spring spirit, which he sees as representing renewal and integration (*Anatomy* 163). The ending of *The Tempest* fits this pattern. [new MLA system]

b. Specific ideas used as evidence for your argument or interpretation:

First consider whether the ideas you're mentioning are "common knowledge" according to the definition in point 3 above; if so, you may not need to give a reference. But when you're relying on ideas that might be disputed by people in your discipline, establish that they're trustworthy by referring to authoritative sources.

e.g. In September 1914, more than 1300 skirmishes were recorded on the Western Front.⁸ [traditional endnote/footnote system]

e.g. Other recent researchers (4,11,12) confirm the finding that drug treatment has little effect in the treatment of pancreatic pseudocysts. [numbered-note system for biomedical sciences]

c. Distinctive or authoritative ideas, whether you agree with them or not:

The way you introduce the reference can indicate your attitude and lead into your own argument.

e.g. In 1966, Ramsay Cook asserted that Canada was in a period of instability (174). That period is not yet over, judging by the same criteria of electoral changeability, economic uncertainty, and confusion in policy decisions. [new MLA system]

e.g. One writer (Von Daniken, 1970) even argues that the Great Pyramid was built for the practical purpose of guiding navigation. [APA system]