

Avoiding Plagiarism in a Research Paper

What follows are some practical tips on ways to avoid plagiarism:

- First and foremost, **make sure you are clear on what the assignment is asking of you.** If there is any confusion as to what is expected of you, make sure to ask your instructor.
- Give yourself **enough time to get the assignment done.** Most cases of plagiarism occur because students feel rushed and pressed for time.
- **Follow the directions** of the assignment at hand.
- Familiarize yourself with the citation format for your discipline. The discipline of nursing, for example, primarily uses **APA formatting.** The two other most popular citation methods are Chicago and MLA. For more information on formatting, please take a look at the pamphlets by the WAC department.
- Develop a **bibliography.** When you come across a source you will be using for your paper, make sure to take down the bibliographical information and to keep track of **all** your sources.
- Make sure to cite, within your paper, **all your secondary sources.** Whenever you reference an argument, words or thoughts that are not your own you must provide a citation to make this clear. Again, you will be using APA formatting when doing as such. You can never be accused of plagiarism if you properly cite all your sources, and illustrate the development of your argument.