

## Citing your sources and why this is important

If you are in college, chances are you will be required to write at least one research paper. Here are some common questions and answers for citing.

### What is citing sources?

- Citing a source means that you show, within the body of your text, that you took words, ideas, figures, images, etc. from another place.

### Why cite?

- Citing makes your work credible, that there are supporting scholars and/or research studies that add value to what you've explained... (you're not just "making it up")
- The other main reason to cite your sources is that it's a way to prove that you haven't plagiarized, i.e., taken words or ideas from somebody else and tried to pass them off as your own. If a teacher knows where you found your information, he or she can personally look at your sources to make sure that you used your own words to express yourself. This gives proper credit to the author and keeps you in the clear of any wrongdoing.
  - On a side note, many colleges and universities incorporate plagiarism detectors such as [grammarly.com](http://grammarly.com).
- Citing gives credit where credit is due. This gives the researchers and scholars credit for the work they did.

### What is plagiarism?

- Plagiarism occurs when you borrow another's words (or ideas) and do not acknowledge that you have done so. In this culture, we consider our words and ideas intellectual property; like a car or any other possession, we believe our words belong to us and cannot be used without our permission.

### What has to be cited?

- Ideas, words, theories, or exact language that another person used in other publications
- Facts, figures, ideas, or other information that is not common knowledge
- Publications that must be cited include: books, book chapters, articles, web pages, theses, etc.
- Another person's exact words should be quoted and cited to show proper credit

## Two of the most common ways to cite are:

### APA

- ✓ *American Psychological Association*: developed by social and behavioral scientists to standardize scientific writing
- ✓ used in psychology, education, and other social sciences

### MLA

- ✓ *Modern Language Association*
- ✓ Used in literature, arts & humanities

Helpful Links for citing:

<http://www2.liu.edu/cwis/cwp/library/workshop/citation.htm>

<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/>

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

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