1. **Plagiarism**

Welcome to the PCOM Library’s plagiarism tutorial. In this lesson, you’ll learn about what plagiarism is, the consequences for engaging in plagiarism, and how to avoid plagiarizing as you write.

2. **What is plagiarism?**

The Oxford English Dictionary defines plagiarism as “the action or practice of taking someone else’s work, idea, etc., and passing it off as one’s own.” Plagiarism is a form of intellectual theft, and can have serious and potentially long-lasting consequences.

Consult PCOM’s General Student Handbook for policies on intellectual property, copyright, and plagiarism.

3. **Examples of plagiarism**

Examples of plagiarism include:

1. Using a passage you copied word-for-word, without citing your source. This includes omitting quotation marks around a copied passage.
2. Changing some words in a copied passage to make it look different.
3. Restating someone else’s idea in your own words without citing your source.
4. Modeling a study after someone else’s without crediting the original author, and
5. Presenting your previously published work as new scholarship.

In most cases, you may use idioms or clichés without attribution. Phrases like “Throw the baby out with the bathwater” and “as old as dirt” have become so common that they don’t need quotation marks or citations.

4. **Common Knowledge**

Common knowledge consists of facts that are widely known. You don’t need to cite common knowledge in your writing. If I write that 12 inches equals one foot, I don’t need to cite this fact, because my audience most likely knows this to be true. What is considered common knowledge depends on the field you are writing for. For instance, the symptoms of Asperger’s Syndrome are common knowledge for psychology graduate students, but should be cited for a lay audience. Always cite information and data from specific studies, and always cite opinions from others. When in doubt, cite the information.
5. Consequences

Intentional or not, plagiarism can severely damage your reputation. A student who plagiarizes all or part of an assignment may fail the assignment, fail the course, or receive academic probation. An author who tries to publish plagiarized work will be rejected from that publication, and may have a hard time publishing in the future. They may also be censured by their employer and, in extreme cases, fired.

The punishments for plagiarism are dire. However, you can easily avoid problems by remembering to properly cite facts and quotations you got from others.

6. Citations

This is an important point, so it bears repeating: you have to cite every source you use in your work. This includes books, articles, websites, images, personal interviews, and more. In addition to direct quotations, be sure to cite any ideas you restate in your own words.

Each citation has two parts: the in-text citation and the full citation. The in-text citation is a short marker within the text of your paper that tells the reader what information came from which source, and directs readers to the full citation. The full citations, which appear in the references or works cited, provide enough information for readers to find the original source.

7. In-Text Citations

How a citation looks depends on the citation style you’re using. There are many different citation styles; APA style, from the American Psychological Association, includes the author and year of the citation within the text. Direct quotations also include the page number.

AMA style, from the American Medical Association, uses a superscript number for in-text citations.

8. Full Citations

As with in-text citations, the format for full citations, as well as what you would call the section containing those citations, depends on the rules of your chosen citation style. For example: in MLA style, the section where you put your full citations is called “Works Cited”. In APA style, it’s called “References”. Citation management software like Refworks can automatically format citations in any style, or you can look at the manual for your chosen citation style.

At a minimum, citations for journal articles should include the author, year, article title, journal title, volume, issue, pages, and DOI, if the article is published online.
9. Full Citations (cont’d)

To properly a webpage or website, include the author, page title, website title, URL, publication date, date last updated, and date of access. Don’t panic if you can’t find all of that information – the important thing is that your reader can still find the original source.

10. Paraphrasing

Paraphrasing is restating information in your own words. To properly paraphrase a passage, read it, then put it away and write notes without looking at the original. Doing this ensures the paraphrase is different enough from the original, since just changing around word order or switching words for synonyms is still plagiarism.

Paraphrases don’t have quotation marks around them, but do have in-text citations. Cite each paraphrased sentence that contains new information from the source.

11. Paraphrasing – Examples

Now for some examples of good and bad paraphrasing. The original source is a paragraph on the electrochemical properties of neurons from Martini & Bartholomew, 1997. Take a moment to read the original before moving on.

12. Paraphrasing – Examples

The passage on the right is an inappropriate paraphrase. The order of the sentences is switched around, but the wording is almost identical to the original passage. Although using chemical symbols along with names makes the sentences look different, replacing a few words with synonyms is not sufficient. In addition, the source is not cited, which would be plagiarism even if the source was paraphrased properly.

13. Paraphrasing – Examples

The passage on the right is now an appropriate paraphrase. The wording is considerably different, with only the phrase “relatively high” being the same. The superscript in the first sentence is the in-text citation in AMA style; in the References section, the first full citation would be the source written by Martini and Bartholomew.

14. Quotations

Quotations are the exact words of a source placed in quotation marks. In APA style, the in-text citation appears after the final quotation mark of a quote, and includes the page number.

Paraphrasing is preferred to quoting, unless the wording in the original is significant and should be reproduced in full. When you use quotations, quote the minimum amount that you need to make your point.
**15. Citing Internet Materials**

By now, you know that you have to cite any sources you use in your writing. This includes internet sources. Whether it’s a professionally published article or a video from your favorite Youtuber – if you use it, cite it. Because it can be difficult to know how to cite various internet sources, use a citation style guide or a citation manager to properly cite an online work.

**16. Appendices & Supplemental Materials**

If you have important data that is too detailed to put in the main text of your work, create an appendix, or include the information as supplemental material. Examples of appropriate contents could be a list of stimulus materials, descriptions of computer code, or detailed demographic descriptions of subpopulations. You may include published tests and measures as an appendix; contact the original publisher for permission to reprint.

Inappropriate appendix contents include a summary of study results and copies of all sources cited in your reference list. The former should be a part of your main paper, and the latter does not need to be reproduced.

**17. Self-Plagiarism**

Self-plagiarism is reusing your own work without indicating you used it for another assignment or publication. If the work you did for one assignment is applicable to a new assignment, ask your professor if you may resubmit it. If you resubmit the same work for multiple assignments without disclosing that you’ve turned it in before, this is self-plagiarism.

Self-plagiarism also applies to published papers. You are guilty of this if you reuse a large amount of previously-published work in a new publication, or republish a book or paper without significant changes. When it is necessary to refer to your previously-published work, quote only the amount of the old work that is necessary and properly cite it. Cite your own previously-published tables and figures and, if necessary, contact the publisher for permission to reprint them.
18. Self-Plagiarism in Publication

When republishing your own work, some methods count as self-plagiarism while others do not. Some acceptable methods of republishing your work are:

- Publishing a manuscript whose abstract was already published
- Publishing a manuscript previously available in a periodical with limited circulation or availability
- Realizing and reinterpreting your previously published data in light of new theories or methodologies

Unacceptable replications include:

- Publishing a manuscript with the only difference being a new introduction
- Republishing a manuscript already offered for public sale
- Translating your already-published manuscript into another language

19. Copyright

Copyright applies to a work as soon as the work is fixed in a tangible form, not just when it’s professionally published. You don’t have to register your work with the U.S. Copyright Office or display the copyright symbol to protect your work. This means that almost everything you find online is copyrighted, including images found on Google Images. Assume that everything you find online and elsewhere is copyrighted, or covered by a usage license, such as Creative Commons.

So, what does copyright have to do with plagiarism? After all, if you properly cite your work, you should be ok, right? Well, not necessarily. Copyright does not affect what you can cite, but it does determine what you can reproduce. For example, including an image from the Internet in your journal article is not plagiarism if it’s cited properly, but including it can violate copyright law if you didn’t get permission to use it, or you use it outside of the terms the copyright holder provided.

For published articles and papers, seek permission to reproduce very long quotations, tables and figures from others’ works, and published test or scale items.
20. Public Domain

Public domain works are not covered by copyright, and thus you can use them without obtaining permission. While you can freely reproduce sources in the public domain, you must still cite them.

There are three categories of public domain works. The first is works whose copyright has expired. As of 2017, works published before 1923 are in the public domain. The second is works published by the U.S. Government. The third is works deliberately released into the public domain, which will be specifically noted as being public domain.

21. Fair Use

As part of U.S. copyright law, the fair use doctrine lets you use a portion of a copyrighted work in certain situations without having to ask for permission and without breaking copyright law. The fair use doctrine is why you can include quotations from a copyrighted source in your own work without getting into legal trouble, while including a multiple paragraphs quoted from another work might land you in hot water.

Fair use takes into account four criteria, called the Four Factor Test:

The first factor is the purpose and character of the use. If you’re using the work for non-profit and educational purposes, your use is more likely to be considered fair use.

The second is the amount of the original work you use. Quoting over 10% of a work is almost certainly not fair use, but try to use only what is necessary.

The third is the nature of the copyrighted work. Reproducing part of a factual work is more likely to be seen as fair use than the reproduction of a short story.

The last factor is the effect your use has on the market for the work. Will the audience of the original work not purchase it because you used it?

Fair use does not take into account the length of the copyrighted work or the background of the person using that work.

If you want to learn more about copyright, public domain, and fair use, visit the library’s Copyright subject guide.

22. Thank you!

Hopefully, now you know how to avoid plagiarizing as you engage in scholarship, research, and writing. Thank you for watching!