

# Plagiarism Handbook

## - a guide for both teachers and students

Follow this guide for tips and tricks on how to avoid plagiarism. It will help you to understand the different styles, methods and ways to quote correctly.

Plus: Test your knowledge with our exercises to see if you mastered the craft.



# What is Urkund?

Urkund is an automated text-matching software used to prevent and detect plagiarism. With customers ranging from PhD levels to elementary schools, from India to Sweden and Ecuador, we help thousands of institutions to learn about plagiarisms and - more importantly - how to avoid it.



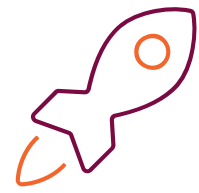
Urkund has a strong **preventative effect** when used at your institutions. Teachers are more aware of plagiarism and students know that shortcuts won't get them very far: **win-win for everyone.**



You can upload your documents to Urkund via **email, web inbox or via your existing LMS** at your institution. We support **all standard file formats and even .zip files** when sent in via email. The analysis address will be provided to you by your teacher.



Once uploaded, we check your document **against our sources** including previously submitted material and use **cutting edge algorithms** that get smarter and evolve with every upload.



Our analysis will then be ready in no time and be sent to the teacher/educator in an **interactive report**. It is then up to the teacher to go through **the findings, evaluate** if plagiarism has occurred or not and share the results with the students if they wish.

## To Keep in Mind

- We don't determine if plagiarism has occurred or not - we show text similarities
- This is a guide meant to help you to get more familiar with plagiarism and not intended as a replacement for your teacher, so make sure to follow your teacher's instructions.
- Getting inspired by previously done research in your field is necessary, often even required and good practice to add credibility to your own research. HOWEVER, stealing ideas is NOT, so always give credit where credit is due.
- Plagiarism is a severe threat to original thinking and academic practice. It also can have serious consequences for you as a student such as being expelled from your programme.

# What is Plagiarism?

To start the guide on the right foot directly, let's dig into the definition of what generally is considered plagiarism. Note that it goes further than just copy-pasting someone else's text and expands to copying someone's (published) idea as a whole. If you want to be really broad, you could also count copyright infringements into it.

According to Jude Carroll, Oxford Brookes University and Carl Mikael Zetterling, KTH Learning Lab, plagiarism exist when someone describes another's thoughts or wording as though they were one's own. This means that plagiarism does not necessarily have to be about textual similarity. It could just as well be a question of structural similarity or, for that matter, conceptual similarity. "In your own text, you are responsible for ensuring that both the thoughts and wording are your own. If you describe someone else's thoughts or wording as your own, you have plagiarised." (Carroll & Zetterling, year XXX)

What it means in effect is that if you have to read text A to be able to create text B, then text A shall be cited as a source. Not mentioning the source constitutes plagiarising.



## Rule of Thumb

*“If you have to read text A to be able to create text B, then text A shall be cited as a source”*

# Why Bother?

Apart from potentially getting expelled, (which should be a concern) plagiarism also is a threat to original and free-thinking.

Honouring academic standards and integrity is one of the critical pillars of what Academia is all about. And with that comes the ability to process what you learned and draw your own conclusions and new theories. Plagiarising someone else's work doesn't show that capability and in the end, hurts yourself and lowers your academic standard.

Additionally, thanks to new technologies, plagiarism has become easier to detect (even if you've already completed your studies) and can have severe consequences on your career.

## You Shall Pass!

Make sure to follow these guidelines to avoid any hick-ups in your academic career

- Always double-check that you and your teacher and on the same page when it comes to referencing
- Inform yourself about the different referencing styles accepted at your university. Most universities have unique guides on it and help pages
- Ask yourself if your text can be considered general or specialist knowledge
- General knowledge consists of generally known facts such as that a day has 24 hours or that Brazil's official language is Portuguese
- The line between general knowledge and specialist knowledge can be slippery so ask your teacher/expert when in doubt
- General knowledge does not require a source
- Reworking the text and exchanging the words but keeping its original meaning mostly requires a source!



# Getting Started

*“People who copy you will always be one step behind”*

**Wayne Gerard Trotman**

## Test Your Knowledge

Five of these examples are plagiarisms. Which ones?

1. Writing or copying a short piece from a source verbatim without stating who the original author is.
2. In cooperation with your tutor/teacher, work further on a text that you have yourself written earlier.
3. Translate another author's text into a different language and use the result without citing the source.
4. Make use of an existing text without stating who the original author is, but make small adjustments that alter the word sequence and sentence structure, replace words with synonyms, remove or add individual words, and so on.
5. Reading several texts and reworking the contents of these into a new documents that isn't like any of the original sources other than a few words or a sentence being the same, without citing any of the sources.
6. Transcribe a maximum 3-4 sentence-long text verbatim and state who the original author is in relation to the text.
7. Translate a text you have originated yourself into another language and make use of the result.
8. Build further on a text that has previously been graded without indicating which parts are old.

Find the answers at the end of the guide! :)

# General /Specialist Knowledge

If, for example, you are writing about the impact of electrical lighting on man's social life, you cannot assume that this knowledge is public property and therefore is considered specialist knowledge. So if you'd take that text without attributing a source and incorporate it in your essay, it would **always** be plagiarism, even if you replace every single word in the text.

Usually, knowledge that isn't considered public property is, with the greatest probability, based on research into the subject and therefore has to be referenced correctly. If you don't name the source, you are plagiarising the author's thoughts and conclusions even if you used your own words describing it.

## Check Facts

If, for example, in an essay regarding Brazil's political development during the late 1900s, you need to mention that Brazil's official language is Portuguese, you usually don't need to cite your source if you feel your readers will be aware of that fact.

If, however, you're handing in a short memorandum with facts about Brazil and your essay relies heavily on a single source, the sources need to be stated.

If you found your sources on the internet, make sure directly note down the source and the date it was published as well as accessed. It should be simple for anyone reading your essay to find that exact same source. Complete Internet addresses and reference to the book's page number is always a requirement. Relevant here is that you don't rely too heavily on one internet source as these can sometimes be unreliable. So, do not forget to check your facts, and preferably verify these facts against several independent sources.



# Plan Your Time

We all know that **procrastination** is the devil and suddenly the last night before the due date is here, but if that is the case, **pull yourself together and write that essay**. Don't take short-cuts and copy the work of your fellow student as **Urkund WILL** catch that. Check out Brian Tracy's "Eat That Frog!" for tips on how to avoid procrastination.

So instead: Start your assignment early and try to divide it into different sub-tasks that you can set individual deadlines to. Then follow the schedule as best as possible and note what you have done so that you can see where you are in terms of time. As an added benefit, not being stressed usually helps with your creativity and allows you to have a buffer when something doesn't work out the way you intended.

# Always Note the Source

It might seem clear but make sure that you always note down the source you found. If it is an Internet article, make sure you also note down the date you accessed it (in case it disappears) as well as which date it was published. If you take your source from a book, make sure to write down which edition you are using.

A good tip is to have a dedicated source notebook or document on your computer, for example, where you write down your sources to recheck them.

The risk if you don't do is that you'll forget the source and spend valuable time searching for it instead of focusing on the assignment.



# Source References

Depending on your discipline, the standards of referencing can vary but the main ones usually considered are Harvard, Oxford, IEEE, APA, MLA, Chicago/Turabian. **Keep in mind that no matter the style you choose, NEVER combine them in one essay.** With the exception of IEEE, the two main style differences are based on if you use footnotes or in-text references.

## The Harvard Style

The Harvard style is often referred to as the author-year-system and involves literature references in direct relation to the text. It is almost identical to the **APA citation** style.



## In-text citations

Author name and year of publication is the minimum but, if it is a direct quote or a specific detail, then you need to include the page number. This way, the reader avoids having to read the entire source to find what is being referred to. The reference is placed in parentheses (Lazar, 2006, p. 34). If you have used pages 34 and 35 then you write pp.34-35. where the pp. stands for "pages" If you are referring to more than one page, write p.34 et seq, where "et seq" stands for "more following". It is also possible to replace "p." with ":" (Lazar 2006:34). If you are referring to the same quote several times, you can skip the page. (Lazar 2006). If you are referring to more than one author and less than four, this is the way to go: (Smith & Jones 2010). For more than four authors write: (Smith et al. 2010) OR Smith et al. (2010) when part of a sentence.

## Reference list

### Book:

Order: author, year, book title, publisher, place of publication.

### Journal article:

Order: author, year, article title, journal title, volume and/or issue number, page range.

### Journal article with doi:

Order: author, year, article title, journal title, volume and/or issue number, page range, website.



# Source References

## Web page:

Order: author, year, document title, site controller/sponsor, location of controller/sponsor, date of viewing, URL address.

## The Oxford Style

The Oxford style means that you place a superscript number <sup>1</sup> in the body text in order to state a reference and is a footnote based system.



## In-text citations

The numbers relate to notes that are either placed in the footer or gathered together at the very end of the text. The latter is less common, as many prefer to read the quote directly when reading the paragraph it belongs to. Place the superscript after your citation <sup>2</sup> and use the same number in your footnote or at the end of your text.

*Note that the format can vary depending on the type of source involved (book, scientific article, webpage, etc.), which scientific discipline you belong to, how many authors are present, and so on. So check previously published work for reference.*

## Reference list (continued on the next page)

### Book:

<sup>2</sup>Order: author, title, edition, publisher location, publisher, publication year.

### E-Book: (particularly when accessed from an online library)

<sup>2</sup>Order: author, title, edition, publisher location, publisher, publication year, website, access date

### Journal with DOI:

<sup>2</sup>Order: same as the journal, often the publishers include how to write the reference

# Source References

Fun Fact: despite its name, the Harvard referencing style is the most commonly used one in the UK and Australia, whereas the APA style is widely used in the US.

## Reference list continued - Oxford Style

### Journal:

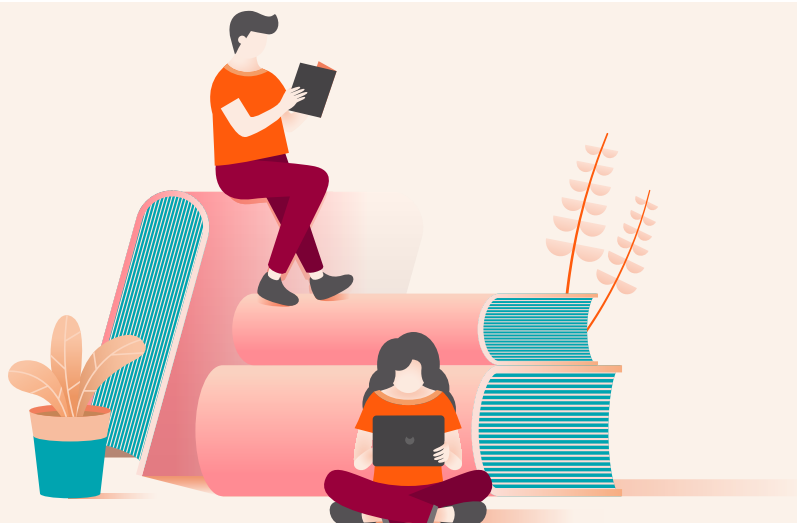
<sup>2</sup>Order: author (first and last name), title of article, journal name, volume, issue, year of publication: page numbers of article

### Website:

<sup>2</sup>(if available): author, organization, authority or company; (year); title of document or page; the name of a web site or owner of the web site; last update of web page; complete URL (http://.....), date of access

## The APA-Style

The APA style is very similar to the Harvard referencing style with one of the main differences being the author and year of publication being separated by a comma:  
(Lazer, 2006).



# Source References

The IEEE-Style is often used for more technical essays with a lot of drawings, illustrations and so on.

## The IEEE-Style

The IEEE referencing style is often used in technical reports as opposed to more text-heavy essays and publications.



## In-text citations

In the IEEE referencing style, a number [X] is inserted when citing another author's work. At the end of your assignment, the full reference [X] of the work is provided. Citations and their corresponding references are provided in the order they appear throughout your writing. Quotes should be in square brackets such as:

*Albert Einstein's theory has been photographed for the first time. [13].*

When mentioning authors, do as followed: Einstein [13] stated that... or used et al. for more than four authors. Do not mention publication years in your citation, as it usually is required in other referencing styles.

## Reference list

As in all other referencing styles, you need to include the entire source at the end of your work. The reference list should contain the full details of all sources cited previously in-text.

Reference list entries should appear in the order the sources are cited in the text of the paper, beginning with [1], and continuing in the ascending numerical order, from the lowest number to the highest.

*Reference list entries do not follow an alphabetical order by author or title of sources.*

# Source References

The MLA-Method allows for more freedom than some of the other referencing styles which is reflected in the Reference List for example. It is often used within arts and is the style of the Modern Language Association (hence MLA).

## The MLA Style

The MLA style is based on guidelines rather than strict rules. If you are primarily acknowledging the source, you need to make sure to attribute the source and enable the reader to find it as well as be consistent in your style.



## In-text citations

If you are using a source within your text, note down the author as well as the page number. (Lazor 36). If you are quoting the author within the sentence, you can write as followed: Lazor is convinced his theory is bulletproof (36).

Multiple authors are, as per usual, listed as et al. after the first author.

Due to its broader nature, this style leaves it up to you to know what information should be provided. They should, however, always come in the same order:

Author, "Title of Source." (e.g. chapter title, article title, web page, song, TV episode), title of container, (e.g. book title, journal title, website, album name, TV show) other contributors, (e.g. translated by, edited by, directed by, performance by), version, (e.g. edition), number, (e.g. volume number, issue number) publisher, publication date, location. (e.g. page number, section number, URL)

## Reference list

1. Author.
2. Title of source.
3. Title of container (self-contained if a book),
4. Other contributors (translators or editors),
5. Version (edition),
6. Number (vol. and/or no.),
7. Publisher,
8. Publication date,
9. Location (pages, paragraphs, URL or DOI).

## Examples

Wallis, Mick, and Simon Shepherd. *Studying Plays*. 2nd ed., Hodder Arnold, 2002.

Watson, Lois. "Body Parts in Limbo When Amputees Can't Let Go." *Sunday Star Times*, 19 Oct. 2008: A8.

Fomison, Tony. *Hill Top Watcher*. 1976, oil on canvas, Te Papa, <https://www.tepapa.govt.nz/visit/exhibitions/toi-art/tony-fomison-lost-dark>. Accessed September 2, 2018.

# More Sources, More Knowledge

## The Harvard Style:

<http://owll.massey.ac.nz/referencing/harvard-style.php>  
<https://www.wikihow.com/Cite-Using-the-Harvard-Style>

## The Oxford Style:

<https://www.ub.umu.se/en/write/references/writing-references-oxford>  
<https://www.wikihow.com/Reference-in-Oxford-Style>  
<https://www.ox.ac.uk/public-affairs/style-guide?wssl=1>

## The IEEE Style:

<http://libraryguides.vu.edu.au/ieeereferencing/gettingstarted>

## The APA Style:

<https://www.wikihow.com/Cite-a-Textbook-in-APA>  
<http://owll.massey.ac.nz/referencing/apa-style.php>

## The MLA Style:

<https://www.wikihow.com/Quote-and-Cite-a-Play-in-an-Essay-Using-MLA-Format>  
<http://owll.massey.ac.nz/referencing/mla-style.php>



# Better Safe than Sorry

As your essay or paper will be checked for plagiarism once uploaded to Urkund, you want to make sure to check your sources BEFORE. So proofread, check your bibliography and note your sources directly when you find them to avoid any unfortunate mishaps.

The idea in any field of study is to produce new knowledge or new ideas around a subject that's either new or old.

The core of academic studies lies in the ability to combine old and new findings as well as developing ideas by using previous research as an engine for new ones. That is where the crucial part comes in: using previous research and findings. To make your own results relevant, you should always include previously done research and QUOTE it accordingly. Always be clear about where you have obtained text, ideas, or, for that matter, pictures, and you'll avoid plagiarism like a pro.

## Some examples:

The following pages provide several examples that you can look at to learn what tends to be regarded as plagiarism. Remember to contact your teacher/tutor in those cases where you are uncertain. The basic rule is always to state sources if you have been inspired by. That goes for thoughts as well as whole paragraphs from a specific source.

*“The idea in any field of study is to produce new knowledge or new ideas around a subject that’s either new or old.”*

### Original text 1

The first metals must have been found existing in the form of nuggets. They must have been pieces of copper or gold, for these are among the few metals occasionally found free in nature. The reddish color of copper or the yellowish color of gold must have caught the eye; and the metallic luster, which is so much more startling and beautiful than the flat, nondescript coloring of most stones, must then have held it. Undoubtedly the first use of metals was as ornaments, in whatever form the pieces had been found, much as colored pebbles or pearly sea shells might have so been used.

(Asimov, Isaac, Greenwood Press, 1979)

### Example 1

The first metals to be discovered were probably lumps of pure metal. These metals belong, that is, among the few that can be found as lumps in nature. One probably first started to use the metals as decoration after which one subsequently saw a more practical use for them.

The writer has not taken the entire text, reworked it and, for the most part, has made use of his own words.

Answer: This is a rewriting (or paraphrase) and can be seen as plagiarism since the writer has not made any reference to the author. The text is very similar to its original source. The actual theories and ideas as well as conclusion is still Isaac Asimov's.

### Example 2

How did Mankind first discover that he could extract metal from ore? The first metals must have been found existing in the form of nuggets of pure metal. These have probably been pieces of copper or gold since these metals belong to the few which have occasionally been found in free form in nature. When this discovery was well made, one began to look for a way of extracting even smaller volumes of metals from ore.

(Asimov, Isaac, Greenwood Press, 1979)

Here, the writer has referred to the source.

Answer: This can be regarded as plagiarism. The writer has copied a couple of sentences straight out of Asimov's book without inserting quotation marks. These sentences are surrounded by the writer's own text which also makes it difficult to see what is the writer's own text and what is Asimov's. Besides there's no page reference in the source reference.

### Example 3

One can be fascinated by the technique of extracting different metals from ore. What was it that, from the start, drove Mankind to start experimenting in order to extract these metals? According to Isaac Asimov, it could have been so that the first metals discovered were gold and copper, which occur lying freely around in nature in the form of lumps. When one had found these, the conclusion could be drawn that there was more to be obtained from different types of ore. The experimentation in attempting to extract metals was then underway

(Asimov, Isaac, Greenwood Press, 1979)

The writer has no quotation marks but refers to the source.

Answer: This is not plagiarism. This is an abstract. The writer has reproduced Asimov's thoughts with his own words and has made a correct source reference. Moreover, there are reference markers ("according to Isaac Asimov...") in connection with the text so that you can easily differentiate between the writer's and Asimov's thoughts.

### Example 4

Mankind's fascination with gold and shining metals stretches right back to the dawn of history. We do not know today how Mankind arrived at the fantastic idea of trying to extract metal from different types of ore. There are a large number of theories about this. A reasonable explanation is that the first metals found were the kind of metals that can be seen as free lying lumps out on the ground. One example of such a metal that can be found without processing ore is gold. After having thus become acquainted with metal, Mankind has started to look for it and has found small volumes in gold ore. From this point, Mankind has started to experiment with extracting even small quantities of metal and, in the process, has discovered other practicable metals and ways of extracting them in the best manner.

There is no source reference, and the text actually looks as though it is based on the original text.

Answer: Now we've entered a grey zone. There is no exact textual similarity but if the writer had actually made use of Asimov's book when the text was produced, a source reference should have been made. The conclusions are, however, not so difficult to draw and, if the writer has arrived at this himself and has not known about Asimov's conclusions, then he probably cannot be accused of plagiarism.



### Example 5

A reasonable explanation of how Mankind has arrived at the amazing idea of trying to extract metal from different types of ore is that the first metals found were such metals as are to be found as free-lying lumps out on the ground. One example of such a metal that can be found without processing ore is gold. Isaac Asimov has worded this explanation in the following way:

*The first metals must have been found existing in the form of nuggets. They must have been pieces of copper or gold, for these are among the few metals occasionally found free in nature. The reddish color of copper or the yellowish color of gold must have caught the eye; and the metallic luster, which is so much more startling and beautiful than the flat, nondescript coloring of most stones, must then have held it. Undoubtedly the first use of metals was as ornaments, in whatever form the pieces had been found, much as colored pebbles or pearly sea shells might have so been used.*  
(Asimov, Isaac, Greenwood Press, 1979, p. 3)

After having thus become acquainted with metal, Mankind has started to look for it and has found small volumes in gold ore. From this point, Mankind has started to experiment with extracting even small quantities of metal and, in the process, has discovered other practicable metals and ways of extracting them in the best manner.

There are no quotation marks around the piece taken from Asimov's book and the writer's thoughts in the rest of the text are clearly influenced by Asimov.

Answer: This is the correct way of dealing with a quotation of this length. This is called a block quotation and requires no quotation marks, since the text is still clearly separated from the writer's own words. It's often considered of being a better way of presenting a quotation of this length. Quotation marks should, however, be used when the text you want to refer to restricts itself to about one sentence. Since the writer quotes the part of Asimov's book where his/her own thoughts have been influenced by, no further reference is needed.

### Original text 2

EARTH, OUR HOME planet, is a world unlike any other. The third planet from the sun, Earth, is the only place in the known universe confirmed to host life. Earth orbits the sun once every 365.25 days. Since our calendar years have only 365 days, we add an extra leap day every four years to account for the difference.

Michael Greshko, <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/science/space/solar-system/earth/> , National Geographic, 23/08/19, visited last 30/08/19

### Example 1

As you all know, Earth is our home planet, and a world, unlike any other. The third planet from the sun, Earth, is the only place in the known universe confirmed to host life. Our Earth orbits the sun once every 365.25 days if you want to be exact. Since our calendar years have only 365 days, we add an extra leap day every four years to account for the difference.

This is mostly considered, "general knowledge" but the writer has almost straight up copied Greshko's text.

Answer: It certainly is general knowledge, but it may still be seen as plagiarism. The reason for that is that the writer has used Greshko's text as a model. In this case, it is not Greshko's conclusions that are plagiarised as these are often considered general knowledge. Greshko's wording is, however, plagiarised, which means that both quotation marks and source reference should be present.

## Essay Mills and Ghostwriters

With the internet entering the classrooms and being omnipresent at all times, knowledge has become available at our fingertips. It, however, also means that it is much easier to gain access to "ready-to-hand-in" content, often in exchange for money. These services are called essay mills, and the writers that create them are referred to as ghostwriters. Usually, that content is taken from previously created student papers and plagiarised itself, making it detectable for our system. But even if it might not be detected this time, future technology most probably will (for example if the writing style is drastically different than previous assignments). So as a student, do your future self a favour and avoid these services in the present to thank yourself for it in the future!

# Internet Resources

If you want to learn more about what can be regarded as plagiarism, there's a whole lot of resources on the Internet. Here are a couple:

A quiz from Indiana University to get their view of what constitutes plagiarism:  
<http://education.indiana.edu/~frick/plagiarism/>

A tutorial on plagiarism created by several Danish Universities, in English:  
<http://www.en.stopplagiat.nu/>

The Interactive Anti-Plagiarism Guide - Jönköping University, in English:  
<http://pingpong.hj.se/public/courseId/10565/publicPage.do>

How to cite in various styles, including in-text and bibliography styles and guides:  
<http://www.citethisforme.com/>

Answers to questions on page XX:

A,C,D,E,H would be handled as plagiarism, B,F are correctly referenced. G can be cheating under certain circumstances, but it is not considered plagiarism in the proper sense.



# Famous Last Words

We hope this guide gives you clarity about what constitutes as plagiarism and what doesn't, whether you are a teacher or a student. Remember it is meant as a **guide, not the final judgement**. We are thankful for all feedback which you can send to us via [marketing@urkund.com](mailto:marketing@urkund.com). Always be aware that the Internet is blessing and curse combined. So be mindful of your sources, check they are available when you include them into your bibliography and note down when you last accessed them **Don't mix and match your referencing style**, keep it coherent and enjoy your learning experience, whether as a student, a pupil, a teacher or a professor!

*“You cannot innovate by copying”*

Larry Ellison

