What is plagiarism?
The CIA student handbook defines plagiarism as “presenting the work of another as one's own (i.e., without proper acknowledgment of the sources). Plagiarism can occur through written work, as well as, orally, visually, or conceptually.”

Did you know that “plagiarism” is a derivative of the Latin word *plagiarius* which means kidnapper?

Plagiarism can happen *intentionally* by having someone else do your work, or by copying another person's work. It can also happen *unintentionally* by neglecting to cite a source, or by not realizing where an idea or thought originated.

You live in a time when so much information is shared. You share photos, music, and even your “status.” You are immersed in an academic environment that encourages the discussion and sharing of ideas. It’s easy to understand how someone else’s ideas could unintentionally be “kidnapped.”

Why should I care about plagiarism?
Academic integrity is necessary to the education process and crucial in developing your own sense of creative expression. Without honesty, your academic and studio endeavors are undermined. If you repeatedly “borrow” thoughts and ideas from others, you could harm your own creative process.

Think about it like this—by not plagiarizing, you are preserving and protecting your creative self and your sense of originality.

On a more practical level, students found guilty of plagiarism may be subject to the disciplinary actions outlined in the CIA student handbook.

How do I avoid plagiarism?
- Give credit where credit is due. You **need** to give credit for anything that doesn’t originate from within you. You **want** to give credit to others; citing sources lends credibility to your paper and demonstrates that you have done research on the topic.
- **TAKE REALLY GOOD NOTES!** Make it a habit to always write down where an idea came from. You will need this information to do the citations correctly.
- If you read it in a book, make a note of the author and title.
- If you heard someone say it, write down who said it and the date.
- If you make photocopies, jot down the source on the back.
- If you saw it on a website, note the URL and the date you visited the site.
**When should I cite?**
Don’t be a “kidnapper”! Any information included in a paper that did not originate in your own head should be cited. There is one exception—common knowledge. Common knowledge is information that is known by a lot of people, can be found in a lot of places and isn’t cited in those sources.

An example of common knowledge is that George Washington was the first President of the United States. This could be included in a paper without a citation. Certain phrases can also be considered common knowledge. You could state that oil and water don’t mix, or that there is more than one way to skin a cat, without citing a source. If you are not sure if you should cite a source, then cite the source. It’s better to be safe than sorry!

**How do I cite?**
There are several different methods and styles of citations. Your professor will usually indicate which style you are required to use. It’s always a good idea to refer to the specific style guide for the particulars. Two of the most commonly used style guides are available on the CIA Library website.

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**Some terms you should know . . .**

**Citation**—a reference to a source of information. The citation should include all the information needed to locate the source; title, author, publication date, etc.

**Quotation**—using someone else’s words exactly. The passage should be placed in quotation marks and cited according to the style guidelines.

**Paraphrase**—using someone else’s idea, but putting it into your own words. Paraphrasing still requires a citation.

**Works Cited or Bibliography**—list of citations for all sources referenced within the paper.