10 Strategies for Avoiding Plagiarism

These strategies will help you write well and avoid violating Bow Valley College’s academic honesty policies.

1) **Base your statements on fact**

Many assignments require that you use facts to support your statements. A fact is information that can be proven to be true using evidence from reliable sources, like books or articles. When you cite reliable sources, you are providing evidence that your statements are true.

For example, we can check a specific source to confirm that the statement in left circle below is accurate. We cannot confirm that that statement in the right circle is accurate, because we do not know where that information came from.

According to Hardy (2016), “property taxes in Canada are used to pay for local city services such as roads, waste removal, and policing” (p. 27).

2) **All sources need a citation**

A citation tells your readers which words or ideas in your paper came from another source, and which parts of the source you used.

To help you reader confirm that your statement is accurate, you need to include the author’s last name, the year of publication, and the page number.

For example, the fact in the circle above was written by John Hardy in 2016. The quotation comes from page 27 of the source.
3) **All citations need a reference**

The three pieces of information in your citations is a “breadcrumb trail” to your reference. It is not enough information to find the source, but it will help your reader to find the corresponding reference at the end of your paper. This reference contains additional information, such as title and publication information.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CITATION</th>
<th>REFERENCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

All citations and references must be written according to the rules of APA style on the library’s website: [http://bowvalleycollege.libguides.com/apa](http://bowvalleycollege.libguides.com/apa)

4) **Copied words need to be in quotation marks and cited**

When you copy the exact words from any source (ex. book, article, webpage), you must put quotation marks (“…””) around the copied words and include a citation.

For example: Canada’s income tax was first introduced “about 100 years ago, to help pay for the First World War” (Hardy, 2016, p. 27).

5) **Your assignment cannot be made up of just quotations**

You can have quotations in your writing, but usually you will need to include your own writing that explains and/or analyzes the sources you use. If you need help with this rule, read your assignment instructions carefully and ask your instructor for more directions.

6) **Paraphrases need to be cited**

A paraphrase is putting someone else’s ideas or facts into your own words. Since you took the ideas or facts from a source, you must also include a citation. A paraphrase does not need quotation marks, but still needs a citation.
7) **Change the words AND sentence structure when you paraphrase**

To paraphrase, you must change both the words *and* the structure of the sentence. For example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Original source</th>
<th>The rise of modern mass homelessness in Canada can be traced directly back to the withdrawal of the Federal government’s investment in affordable housing and pan-Canadian cuts to welfare beginning in the 1980s.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poor paraphrase</td>
<td>Gaetz, Gulliver, and Richter (2016) explained that in Canada, current widespread homelessness is a direct result of the Federal government’s withdrawal from investing in housing that began in the 1980s (p. 14).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good paraphrase</td>
<td>In their analysis of the state of homelessness in Canada, Gaetz, Gulliver and Richter (2016) concluded the Canadian government has failed to properly fund affordable housing, which has exacerbated homelessness (p. 14).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8) **Unless it is group work, do not share your work with other students**

Unless it is a group assignment, allowing another student to use your work is plagiarism. Always read directions of your assignments carefully. If it does not say it is a group assignment, do not share your work with classmates.

9) **Do not copy the work of other students**

For any type of assignment or situation, including papers, presentations, and exams, do not copy the work of other students.

10) **Do not re-use your own work**

It is plagiarism to re-use an assignment or parts of an assignment by submitting them in a different assignment. This includes assignments in the same course and different courses.