Understanding Plagiarism

Plagiarism is defined by Merriam Webster as the act of stealing or passing off (the ideas or words of another) as one’s own.

WHAT ARE SOME TYPES OF PLAGIARISM?

- Rewording or paraphrasing a passage without citing the author.
- Buying or using work written by someone else.
- Cutting and pasting passages from various sources into a source without citing them.

Cite your sources to avoid plagiarizing.

WHEN SHOULD YOU CITE?

- Quoting word for word
- Summarizing or Paraphrasing
- Using uncommon facts or statistics

You do not need to cite if you are using your own ideas.

For more information on how George Mason University defines plagiarism, see the Mason Honor Code. https://oai.gmu.edu/mason-honor-code/.
Additional Tips to Avoid Plagiarism

• Take good notes on where you found specific ideas
• Capture complete citations for each item used
• Use quotation marks (""") when directly stating another person’s words
• Paraphrase or summarize ideas in your own words and then cite from where the idea originated.

Resources

Use the following tutorials to help you with citations:


For more help with citations, contact the writing center: https://writingcenter.gmu.edu/