

# WHAT IS PLAGIARISM?



[Wiktionary](#) states that plagiarism is “ The act of plagiarizing: the copying of another person's ideas, text, or other creative work, and presenting it as one's own, especially without permission. ” and that a [plagiarist](#) (plural plagiarists) is “ One who plagiarizes; or purloins the words, writings, or ideas of another, and passes them off as his or her own; a literary thief; a plagiarist. ” Further reference - [Wikipedia - Plagiarism](#)

It is of value to reiterate that plagiarism is not merely the copying of text but is the presentation of another person's idea as one's own irrespective of the specific words or construction method used when expressing that idea.

## BUT EVERYTHING ON THE WWW IS FREE - WHY CAN'T I COPY IT?

Plagiarism is dishonest and illegal. We are all indebted to authors from whom we borrow exact words, ideas, opinions, theories and more. We should always give consideration to the factor of integrity prior to attaching our names to something therefore it is essential we make every effort to quote, paraphrase and cite information correctly.

The World Wide Web has become a more popular source of information for all of us and many questions have arisen about how to avoid plagiarizing the available sources. In most cases, the same rules apply as to a printed source: when a writer must refer to ideas or quote from a web site - he / she must cite that source. Copying visual information or graphics from a web site (or from a printed source) is very similar to quoting information and the source of the visual information or graphic must be cited.

## CAN I BE PROSECUTED?

The simple answer is yes - if the content owner chooses to do so.

## HOW CAN I AVOID PLAGIARISM

Credits should be displayed whenever one without permission -

- Paraphrases another persons writing.
- Quotes another persons statement.
- Uses another persons idea, opinion and / or theory.

## ARE THERE ANY SIMPLE ANSWERS THAT WILL HELP?

To avoid any potential problems obtain permission from web site owners before using any of the displayed content.

If you are uncertain of what is allowed to be copied / re-published send an email to the site owner/s explaining clearly what it is you wish to copy / re-publish including references to their content, your web site URL / page etc so they may make a more informed decision.

