Plagiarism Guide

What is Plagiarism?

Exact words, general concepts, or research cannot be taken from a source without proper citation. Otherwise, it appears as if the writer is attempting to pass someone else's work off as their own.

Here is the SVSU definition of plagiarism:
"Intentionally or unintentionally presenting another person's expressions –ideas, opinions, illustrations, data, style–as one's own expression. Examples of plagiarism include: failing to use quotation marks when directly quoting from a source; failing to document distinctive ideas from a source; fabricating or inventing sources; and copying information from computer-based sources, e.g.., the Internet."
(https://www.svsu.edu/studentconductprograms/academicintegrity/academicintegritypolicy/)

How to Avoid Plagiarism

In order to avoid plagiarism, it is a good idea to do the following:

Include in-text citations when the source is first used. In paraphrasing or summarizing, frequent citations (every 2-3 sentences) are encouraged to clarify source information. Citations should also be used for specific information like dates, percentages, or dollar amounts. All direct quotations should also have a citation that includes the page number.

Quote words that came from someone else. When directly using another's spoken or written words, place them in quotation marks and cite them.

Paraphrase others' ideas by putting them in your own words. Proper paraphrasing does not attempt to mimic another writer's sentence structure or vocabulary. Instead, paraphrasing represents the basic idea of the original information. All paraphrased ideas should still be cited.

Paraphrasing

Changing, moving, or omitting a few words does not count as paraphrasing because the same sentence structure and/or word choices as the original source are still being used. Paraphrasing involves drastically rewording and combining information into brand new sentences that reflect a different writing voice and style.

The Purdue OWL has a helpful page about paraphrasing: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/619/1/

Direct Quotations

Exact words cannot be taken from a source and claimed to be someone else's. Exact words either need to be drastically rephrased with new words and sentence structure, or they need to be placed in quotation marks.

Citations

Citations also need to be properly formatted in a standard style. You should not overlook properly documenting where the sources you used came from.

For help with citation styles, visit: http://mtmc.hu.mtu.edu/resources/