



“Plagiarism-Proofing” Strategies

Five Ways to Reduce Plagiarism

Strategy 1: Reduce Opportunity. Reduce the opportunity to plagiarize. You can do this in a several ways. (1) Keep assignments *fresh* and *relevant*. When you change the list of topics, you show you value original thought, and at the same time, reduce the opportunity to easily reuse assignments from others who have previously taken the same course, or that may be posted in paper mills on the Internet. (2) Limit the range of acceptable references such as requiring references only from the last five years, limiting the database, or providing the database you want students to use. (3) Avoid general assignments on a topic; the more general assignments give greater opportunity to find papers that already deal with the assignment.

Strategy 2: Prepare Interesting Assignments. Prepare *non-trivial* and carefully *sequenced* assignments that ask questions worth asking of the students and that demand their engagement and creativity. Require explanations, problem solving, choices, decision making, and self-assessment; deal with basic human issues relevant to the students’ lives.

Strategy 3: Require Stages of Work. Design assignments in *layers* and give detailed directions about the *process*, not just the *product* requirements. McKenzie’s site on [The New Plagiarism](#) recommends three levels: Level 1: Just the Facts; Level 2: Other People’s Ideas; and Level 3: New ideas and Synthesis. Or an assignment could be divided into other parts due at different times. Similar strategies are recommended at the Virtual Salt site on [Anti-Plagiarism Strategies](#).

This plan of creating an assignment in stages allows for feedback to students at intervals and gives students time to think and respond reflectively to feedback on previous stages. If students have one big assignment due at one time, the time pressures will increase and they are more likely to take the risk of cheating to get the assignment in on time.

Strategy 4: Give Explicit Guidance and Models. Provide explicit guidance by defining and explaining requirements, giving rubrics or checklists of requirements, providing resources to support students, and showing examples of excellent assignments. Many students do not plagiarize on purpose; they need to be taught where and how to search, use research, keep notes, paraphrase, cite, synthesize research findings, and create and express original thought. An example: if you want a thesis statement give a direct link to its definition at the [Purdue OWL](#).

Strategy 5: Activate an Honor Code and Academic Integrity. Use an honor code and encourage academic integrity, explaining the particular standards of academic integrity in your course and how to be successful in your course. After this, make clear what you mean by the term “plagiarism” and its consequences in your particular course. Bedford St. Martin’s site has a review with “do’s” and “don’ts” on [Thinking and Talking about Plagiarism](#). The Minnesota State Colleges & Universities has a site on creation of [Plagiarism-Proof Assignments](#). Christie (2003) has more strategies for [Designing Online Courses to Discourage Dishonesty](#).

Resources to Guide Students

[What is Plagiarism at Indiana University?](#) gives practice in paraphrasing vs. plagiarism.

[Understanding Plagiarism](#) (Prentice-Hall) is an active tutorial for students.

[How to Recognize Plagiarism](#) (Indiana University) is a tutorial with cases and examples.

[Citing Sources and Avoiding Plagiarism](#) (Duke) builds awareness with information and video.

[Ipl2 for Teens](#) gives step by step research and writing guidance.

[Digital Index Card](#) is a useful early-stage tool for noting and keeping track of references.

[Research and Documentation Online](#) (Bedford St. Martin) gives research sources and documentation guidance for the humanities, social sciences, history, and sciences.

[OWL Purdue Online Writing Lab](#) gives general guidance on writing, style guides, link to online tutors, and exercises.

[Guide to Plagiarism and Cyberplagiarism](#) gives resources for both faculty and students.

[VAIL, Virtual Academic Integrity Laboratory](#) gives resources for both faculty and students.

URLs

URLs for the websites cited in this file are listed below in alphabetical order.

Anti-Plagiarism Strategies: <http://ctlplagiarism.project.mnscu.edu/>

Citing Sources and Avoiding Plagiarism: <http://library.duke.edu/research/plagiarism/index.html>.

Digital Index Card: <http://landmark-project.com/evaluation/dic1.php>

Guide to Plagiarism and Cyber-Plagiarism (University of Alberta):
<http://guides.library.ualberta.ca/content.php?pid=62200&sid=458936>

How to Recognize Plagiarism (Indiana University, Bloomington): <https://www.indiana.edu/~istd/>.

Ipl2 For Teens: <http://www.ipl.org/div/aplus/stepfirst.htm>

Online Writing Lab (OWL, Purdue): <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/619/01/>.

Plagiarism-Proof Assignments: <http://ctlplagiarism.project.mnscu.edu/>

Designing Online Courses to Discourage Dishonesty:
<http://net.educause.edu/ir/library/pdf/EQM0348.pdf>

Purdue OWL: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/>

Research and Documentation (Bedford St. Martin): <http://bcs.bedfordstmartins.com/resdoc5e/>

Teaching and Talking about Plagiarism: [Teaching and Talking about Plagiarism](#)

The New Plagiarism: <http://fno.org/may98/cov98may.html>

Understanding Plagiarism (Prentice Hall):
http://wps.prenhall.com/hss_understand_plagiarism_1/0,6622,427064-,00.html

VAIL, Virtual Academic Integrity Laboratory: <http://www.umuc.edu/cip/vail/>

What is Plagiarism at Indiana University?
<https://www.indiana.edu/~tedfrick/plagiarism/item1.html>