

What is Citation?

A “citation” is the way you tell your readers that certain material in your work came from another source. It also gives your readers the information necessary to find the location details of that source on the reference or Works Cited page.

A citation must include a set of parentheses. Without a set of parenthesis, one does not have a proper in-text citation and can risk being charged with plagiarism.

Here is what an in-text citation looks like below in red font:

Due to needed upgrades to the Indianapolis Zoo exhibits, their only polar bear will relocate to Detroit (Ryckahert & Lange, 2016).

Why should you cite sources?

- To give credit to the source authors
- To help your audience/reader find out more about your research/arguments/ideas/topic
- To strengthen your work by providing outside support to your ideas
- To keep you from failing a paper, a course or being sued in the real world

Doesn't citing sources make my work seem less original?

No. Citing sources actually helps your reader distinguish your ideas from those of your sources. This will actually emphasize the originality of your own work.

Doesn't having too many citations make my paper look weird?

No, it does not make your paper look weird. It makes your paper accurate. You must cite anything quoted OR paraphrased. It is okay to have a lot of citations.

When do I need to cite?

- When you use words, thoughts, ideas, etc. of someone else
- When you direct quote
- When you paraphrase
- When you use or reference an idea or thought that has already been expressed
- When you make any reference to another source
- When another's ideas, words or thoughts have influenced your writing and research

When in doubt, cite! It is better to cite too much than not enough or not at all. The only thing you do not need to cite is your opinion; however, be sure that it is, indeed, truly your opinion.