Plagiarism

One of the most common types of publication misconduct is plagiarism—when one author deliberately uses another's work without permission, credit, or acknowledgment. Plagiarism takes different forms, from literal copying to paraphrasing some else's work and can include:

| Data | Words and Phrases | Ideas and Concepts |

Plagiarism has varying different levels of severity, such as:
- How much of someone's work was taken—a few lines, paragraphs, pages, the full article?
- What was copied—results, methods, or introduction section?

When it comes to your work, always remember that crediting the work of others (including your advisor's or your own previous work) is a critical part of the process. You should always place your work in the context of the advancement of the field, and acknowledge the findings of others on which you have built your research.

Guide to Plagiarism and How to Prevent It*

Action	What it is	Is it unethical?	What should you do?
Literal Copying	Reproducing a work word for word, in whole or in part, without permission and acknowledgment of the original source.	**Yes.** Literal copying is only acceptable if you reference the source and put quotation marks around the copied text.	■ Keep track of sources you use while researching and where you used it in your paper ■ Make sure to fully acknowledge and properly cite the original source in your paper ■ Even when you properly reference, avoid using others' work word for word unless you put it in quotation marks
Substantial copying	This can include research materials, processes, tables, or equipment.	**Yes.** "Substantial" can be defined as both quantity and quality of what was copied. If your work captures the essence of another's work, it should be cited.	■ Ask yourself if your work has benefited from the skill and judgment of the original author? ■ The degree to which you answer "yes" will indicate whether substantial copying has taken place ■ If so, be sure to cite the original source
Paraphrasing	Reproducing someone else's ideas while not copying word for word, without permission and acknowledgment of the original source.	**Yes.** Paraphrasing is only acceptable if you properly reference the source and make sure that you do not change the meaning of what the source intended.	■ Make sure that you understand what the original author means ■ Never copy and paste words that you do not fully understand ■ Think about how the essential ideas of the source relate to your own work, until you can deliver the information to others without referring to the source ■ Compare your paraphrasing with the source, to make sure you retain the intended meaning, even if you changed the words
Text-recycling	Reproducing portions of an author's own work in a paper, and resubmitting it for publication as an entirely new paper	**Yes.** See our separate factsheet on duplicate submission	■ Put anything in quotes that is taken directly from a previously published paper, even if you are reusing something in your own words ■ Make sure to reference the source accordingly

*When in doubt, always consult with your professor, advisor, or someone in a position of authority who can guide you to the right course of action.

References

1. Committee on Publication Ethics Guidelines on Good Publication Practice. Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE). 1999. Accessed: June 15, 2012.
2. Elsevier. Publishing Ethics Resource Kit (PERK). Available at: http://www.elsevier.com/wps/find/editorshome.editors/Introduction. Accessed: June 11, 2012.

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