



**STRAYER**  
UNIVERSITY

# WRITING STANDARDS



Communicating professionally and ethically is one of the essential skill sets we can teach you at Strayer. The following guidelines will ensure:

- Your writing is professional
- You avoid plagiarizing others, which is essential to writing ethically
- You give credit to others in your work

Visit Strayer's [Academic Integrity Center](#) for more information.

## General Standards

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### Use Appropriate Formatting

- Include page numbers.
- Use 1-inch margins.
- Use Arial, Courier, Times New Roman, or Calibri font style.
- Use 10-, 11-, or 12-point font size for the body of your text.
- Use numerals (1, 2, 3, and so on) **or** spell out numbers (one, two, three, and so on). Be consistent with your choice throughout the assignment.
- Use either single or double spacing, according to assignment guidelines.

### Title Your Work

- If assignment **requires** a title page:
  - Include the assignment title, your name, course title, your professor's name, and the date of submission on a separate page.
- If assignment **does not require** a title page (stated in the assignment details):
  - a. Include all required content in a header at the top of your document.
  - or** b. Include all required content where appropriate for assignment format.  
Examples of appropriate places per assignment: letterhead of a business letter assignment or a title slide for a PowerPoint presentation.

### Write Clearly

- Use appropriate language and be concise.
- Write in active voice when possible. [Find tips here.](#)
- Use the point of view (first, second, or third person) required by the assignment guidelines.
- Use spelling and grammar check and proofread to help ensure your work is error free.

### Cite Credible Sources

- Use credible sources to support your ideas/work. [Find tips here.](#)
- Cite your sources throughout your work when you borrow someone else's words or ideas. Give credit to the authors.
- Look for a permalink tool for a webpage when possible (especially when an electronic source requires logging in like the Strayer Library). [Find tips here.](#)
- Add each cited source to the Source List at the end of your assignment. (See the Giving Credit to Authors and Sources section for more details.)
- Don't forget to cite and add your textbook to the Source List if you use it as a source.

### Build a Source List

- Include a Source List when the assignment requires research or if you cite the textbook.
- Type "Sources" centered on the first line of the page.
- List the sources that you used in your assignment.
- Organize sources in a numbered list and in order of use throughout the paper. Use the original number when citing a source multiple times.
- For more information, see the Source List section.

## Writing Assignments

Strayer University uses several different types of writing assignments. The Strayer University Student Writing Standards are designed to allow flexibility in formatting your assignment and giving credit to your sources. This section covers specific areas to help you properly format and develop your assignments. Note: The specific format guidelines override guidelines in the General Standards section.

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### **Paper and Essay Specific Format Guidelines**

- Use double spacing throughout the body of your assignment.
- Use a consistent 12-point font throughout your assignment submission. (For acceptable fonts, see General Standards section.)
- Use the point of view (first or third person) required by the assignment guidelines.
- Section headings can be used to divide different content areas. Align section headings (centered) on the page, be consistent, and include at least two section headings in the assignment.
- Follow all other General Standards section guidelines.

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### **PowerPoint or Slideshow Specific Format Guidelines**

- Title slides should include the project name (title your work to capture attention if possible), a subtitle (if needed), the course title, and your name.
- Use spacing that improves professional style (mixing single and double spacing as needed).
- Use a background color or image on slides.
- Use Calibri, Lucida Console, Helvetica, Futura, Myriad Pro, or Gill Sans font styles.
- Use 28-32 point font size for the body of your slides (based on your chosen font style). Avoid font sizes below 24-point.
- Use 36-44 point font size for the titles of your slides (based on chosen font style).
- Limit content per slide (no more than 7 lines on any slide and no more than 7 words per line).
- Include slide numbers when your slide show has 3+ slides. You may place the numbers wherever you like (but be consistent).
- Include appropriate images that connect directly to slide content or presentation content.
- Follow additional guidelines from the PowerPoint or Slideshow Specific Format Guidelines section and assignment guidelines.

## Giving Credit to Authors and Sources

When quoting or paraphrasing another source, you need to give credit by using an in-text citation. An in-text citation includes the author’s last name and the number of the source from the Source List. A well-researched assignment has at least as many sources as pages (see Writing Assignments for the required number of sources). [Find tips here.](#)

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### Option #1: Paraphrasing

#### Rewording Source Information in Your Own Words

- Rephrase the source information in your words. Be sure not to repeat the same words of the author.
- Add a number to the end of your source (which will tie to your Source List).
- Remember, you cannot just replace words of the original sentence.

#### ➔ Examples

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##### ORIGINAL SOURCE

“Writing at a college level requires informed research.”

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##### PARAPHRASING

As Harvey wrote, when writing a paper for higher education, it is critical to research and cite sources (1).

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When writing a paper for higher education, it is imperative to research and cite sources (Harvey, 1).

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### Option #2: Quoting

#### Citing Another Person’s Work Word-For-Word

- Place quotation marks at the beginning and the end of the quoted information.
- Add a number to the end of your source (which will tie to your Source List).
- Do not quote more than one to two sentences (approximately 25 words) at a time.
- Do not start a sentence with a quotation.
- Introduce and explain quotes within the context of your paper.

#### ➔ Examples

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##### ORIGINAL SOURCE

“Writing at a college level requires informed research.”

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##### QUOTING

Harvey wrote in his book, “Writing at a college level requires informed research” (1).

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Many authors agree, “Writing at a college level requires informed research” (Harvey, 1).

## Traditional Sources

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### Page Numbers

When referencing multiple pages in a text book or other large book, consider adding page numbers to help the reader understand where the information you referenced can be found. You can do this in three ways:

- a. In the body of your paper;
- or** b. In the citation;
- or** c. By listing page numbers in the order they were used in your paper on the Source List.

Check with your instructor or the assignment guidelines to see if there is a preference based on your course.

### ➔ Example

#### IN-TEXT CITATION

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(Harvey, 1, p. 16)

In the example, the author is Harvey, the source list number is 1, and the page number that this information can be found on is page 16.

### Multiple Sources (Synthesizing)

Synthesizing means using multiple sources in one sentence or paragraph (typically paraphrased) to make a strong point. This is normally done with more advanced writing, but could happen in any writing where you use more than one source.

The key here is clarity. If you paraphrase multiple sources in the same sentence (of paragraph if the majority of the information contained in the paragraph is paraphrased), you should include each source in the citation. Separate sources using semi-colons (;) and create the citation in the normal style that you would for using only one source (Name, Source Number).

### ➔ Example

#### SYNTHESIZED IN-TEXT CITATION

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(Harvey, 1; Buchanan, 2)

In the example, the authors Harvey and Buchanan were paraphrased to help the student make a strong point. Harvey is the first source on the source list, and Buchanan is the second source on the source list.

## Web Sources

A web source is any source accessed through an internet browser. Before using any source, first determine its credibility. Then decide if the source is appropriate and relevant for your project. [Find tips here.](#)

### Home Pages

A home page is the main page that loads when you type a standard web address. For instance, if you type Google.com into the web browser, you will be taken to Google's home page.

If you do need to cite a home page, use the webpage's title from the browser. This found by moving your mouse cursor over the webpage name at the top of the browser. When citing a homepage, it is likely because there is a news thread, image, or basic piece of information on a company that you wish to include in your assignment.

### Specific Web Pages

If you are using any web page other than the home page, include the specific title of the page and the direct link (when possible) for that specific page in your Source List Entry.

If your assignment used multiple pages from the same author/source, create separate Source List Entries for each page when possible (if the title and/or web address is different).

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### Discussion Posts

When quoting or paraphrasing a source for discussion threads, include the source number in parenthesis after the body text where you quote or paraphrase. At the end of your post, type the word "Sources" and below that include a list of any sources that you cited.

If you pulled information from more than one source, continue to number the additional sources in the order that they appear in your post.

For more information on building a Source List Entry, see Source List section.

### ➔ Examples

#### SAMPLE POST

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The work is the important part of any writing assignment. According to Smith, "writing things down is the biggest challenge" (1). This is significant because...

The other side of this is also important. It is noted that "actually writing isn't important as much as putting ideas somewhere useful" (2).

#### SOURCES

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1. William Smith. 2018. The Way Things Are. <http://www.samplesite.com/writing>
2. Patricia Smith. 2018. The Way Things Really Are. <http://www.betterthansample.com/tiger>

### Effective Internet Links

When sharing a link to an article with your instructor and classmates, start with a brief summary and why you chose to share it.

Be sure to check the link you're posting to be sure it will work for your classmates. They should be able to just click on the link and go directly to your shared site.

#### Share vs. URL Options

Cutting and pasting the URL (web address) from your browser may not allow others to view your source. This makes it hard for people to engage with the content you used.

To avoid this problem, look for a "share" option and choose that when possible so your classmates and professor get the full, direct link. Always test your link(s) before submitting to make sure they work.

If you cannot properly share the link, include the article as an attachment. Interested classmates and your professor can reference the article shared as an attachment. [Find tips here.](#)

### ➔ Examples

#### POOR EXAMPLE

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Hey check out this article: [http://www.Jobs4You.FED/Jobs\\_u\\_can\\_get](http://www.Jobs4You.FED/Jobs_u_can_get)

#### BETTER EXAMPLE

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After reading the textbook this week, I researched job sites. I found an article on how to find the best job site depending on the job you're looking for. The author shared some interesting tools such as job sites that collect job postings from other sites and ranks them from newest to oldest, depending on category. Check out the article at this link: [http://www.Jobs4You.FED/Jobs\\_u\\_can\\_get](http://www.Jobs4You.FED/Jobs_u_can_get)

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## Charts, Images, and Tables

Charts, images, and tables should be centered and followed by an in-text citation. Design your page and place a citation below the chart, image, or table. When referring to the chart, image, or table in the body of the assignment, use the citation.

On your Source List, provide the following details of the visual:

- Author's name (if created by you, provide your name)
- Date (if created by you, provide the year)
- Type (Chart, Image, or Table)
- How to find it (link or other information – See Source List section for additional details).

## Source List

The Source List (which includes the sources that you used in your assignment) is a new page you add at the end of your paper. The list has two purposes: it gives credit to the authors that you use and gives your readers enough information to find the source without your help. Build your Source List as you write.

### Setting Up the Source List Page

- Type “Sources” at the top of a new page.
- Include a numbered list of the sources you used in your paper (the numbers indicate the order in which you used them).
  1. Use the number one (1) for the first source used in the paper, the number two (2) for the second source, and so on.
  2. Use the same number for a source if you use it multiple times.

### Creating a Source List Entry

- Ensure each source includes five parts: author or organization, publication date, title, page number (if needed), and how to find it. If you have trouble finding these details, then re-evaluate the credibility of your source.
- Use the browser link for a public webpage.
- Use a permalink for a webpage when possible. Find tips here.
- Instruct your readers how to find all sources that do not have a browser link or a permalink.
- Separate each Source List Element with a period on your Source List.

## Source List Elements

AUTHOR	PUBLICATION DATE	TITLE	PAGE NO.	HOW TO FIND
The person(s) who published the source. This can be a single person, a group of people, or an organization. If the source has no author, use “No author” where you would list the author.	The date the source was published. If the source has no publication date, use “No date” where you would list the date.	The title of the source. If the source has no title, use “No title” where you would list the title.	The page number(s) used. If the source has no page numbers, omit this section from your Source List Entry.	Instruct readers how to find all sources. Keep explanations simple and concise, but provide enough information so the source can be located. <b>Note:</b> It is your responsibility to make sure the source can be found.

### ➔ Examples

Michael Harvey  In the case of multiple authors, only list the first.	2013  This is not the same as copyright date, which is denoted by ©	The Nuts & Bolts of College Writing	p. 1  Include p. and the page(s) used.	<a href="http://libdatab.strayer.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx">http://libdatab.strayer.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx</a>
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➔ **How It Will Look in Your Source List**

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1. Michael Harvey. 2013. The Nuts & Bolts of College Writing. p. 1. <http://libdatab.strayer.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx>

➔ **Sample Source List**

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1. Michael Harvey, 2013, The Nuts & Bolts of College Writing, <http://libdatab.strayer.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx>
2. William R. Stanek. 2010. Storyboarding Techniques chapter in Effective Writing for Business, College and Life. [http://libdatab.strayer.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=359141&site=eds-live&scope=site&ebv=EB&ppid=pp\\_23](http://libdatab.strayer.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=359141&site=eds-live&scope=site&ebv=EB&ppid=pp_23)
3. Ziad Hicham. 2017. Vocabulary Growth in College-Level Students' Narrative Writing. <http://libdatab.strayer.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=edsdoj&AN=edsdoj.9b7fad40e529462baf3a936aaf81420&site=eds-live&scope=site>
4. Anya Kamenetz. July 10, 2015. The Writing Assignment That Changes Lives. <https://www.npr.org/sections/ed/2015/07/10/419202925/the-writing-assignment-that-changes-lives>
5. Brad Thor. June 14, 2016. The Best Writing Advice I Ever Got. <http://time.com/4363050/brad-thor-best-writing-advice/>
6. Karen Hertzberg. June 15, 2017. How to Improve Writing Skills in 15 Easy Steps. <https://www.grammarly.com/blog/how-to-improve-writing-skills/>
7. Roy Peter Clark. 2008. Writing Tools: 55 Essential Strategies for Every Writer. p.55-67. Book on Amazon.com.
8. C.M. Gill. 2014. The Psychology of Grading and Scoring chapter in Essential Writing Skills for College & Beyond. Textbook.
9. ABC Company's Policy & Procedures Committee. No Date. Employee Dress and Attendance Policy. Policy in my office.
10. Henry M. Sayre. 2014. The Humanities: Culture, Continuity and Change, Vol. 1. This is the HUM111 textbook.
11. Savannah Student. 2018. Image. <http://www.studentsite.com>
12. Don Dollarsign. 2018. Chart. <http://www.allaboutthemoney.com>
13. Company Newsletter Name. 2018. Table. Company Newsletter Printed Copy (provided upon request).