Hi, I’m Kimberly Wirth, a librarian at the Porter Henderson Library. In this video, I will share some tips on how to avoid accidental plagiarism when working on your assignments.
Plagiarism is theft of someone else’s words or ideas and passing them off as your own.

ASU takes this seriously and treats occurrences of plagiarism as a form of academic misconduct.
Whether it is unintentional, or intentional

- No credit for the assignment
- Failing the course
- Suspension
- Expulsion

The penalties are very serious if you are caught plagiarizing
There is quite a bit you can do to avoid accidental plagiarism. When developing your topic, include both the contributions from your sources and your own thoughts and ideas. It is important to use a recognized citation style to help the reader differentiate between your original contributions and the work of others.

Avoiding plagiarism begins when you are reading sources and taking down notes. Good notes allow you to properly match ideas with the source for citation and distinguish between quotes and paraphrased passages.
Paraphrasing sounds simple, but it is very easy to accidentally plagiarize when trying to put something in your own words. Try this approach: after you have read the chapter or article close the book and do not peek!

Then think about what you just read. What is it about? What point is the author making and why does he/she think it is important, how effective/persuasive is the author at making his/her point?
And finally, write about it using your own words – remember no peeking at the source so that you’re not influenced by the words the author chose.

Moving from notes to your paper

- **Use quotations marks** for words directly quoted from the source

When writing your paper, refer to the good notes you took and make sure you do the following:

Use quotation marks whenever you are using the author’s exact words.
Use synonyms when paraphrasing the author’s words

Be sure to paraphrase, to show your understanding of what you read and to avoid having too many quotes.
Add your own contributions to the scholarly conversation on your topic by including your own thoughts and ideas.

And Mention other authors by name in your paper when referencing their ideas or research findings.
One final tip. It sounds corny, but it is important to give yourself time. The research, writing, and proper citation process takes time if you want to do it well. Good luck with your assignments and if you have any questions, please check with your professor or a librarian.