



Rigorous Documentation

What is rigorous documentation?

Rigorous documentation means that you document every claim you make, and you don't trust the undocumented claims of others.

Why is rigorous documentation important?

Rigorous documentation helps you get the facts right and quickly proves to others that you are accurately representing your sources. A degree or prestigious award cannot give people the magical ability to create real data out of thin air.



How can you use rigorous documentation in your research?

1. **Document every claim you make**, and don't trust the undocumented claims of others.
2. **Beware of citation bluffs.** Don't cite a source to support your point if the source doesn't actually provide that support, and watch out for others who employ this common trick.
3. **Directly quote your sources.** This proves that you read the source, and it helps people quickly find the context of your quote. It's okay to use short quote snippets, but make sure you paraphrase the rest accurately.
4. **Do calculations in a spreadsheet and make it available.** It's quick and easy to share spreadsheets via online file-sharing services.
5. **Save copies of your sources**, in case they disappear from the internet.
6. **Use credible sources.** For more about this, check out the Just Facts Academy videos about Primary Sources, Comprehensiveness, and Raw Data.

REMEMBER: Real science is about empirical facts, not the claims of selected scientists or slogans that use the word "science."