

members to know right away that newscasters are reporting the comments and opinions of others and NOT giving their personal opinions.

**Example:** Mayor Ronald Moore says too many local businesses are mismanaged.

In radio-TV news, attribution is rarely reported in the middle of a sentence or at the end of a sentence as is often done in newspapers.

**Example (poor):** Too many local businesses, Mayor Ronald Moore says, are mismanaged.

**Example (poor):** Too many local businesses are mismanaged, Mayor Ronald Moore says.

Attribution is not necessary in every sentence, but it is MANDATORY when a statement is clearly opinion. Whenever a piece of information is a known and indisputable fact, you don't need attribution.

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### Stop and Write

Which of the following sentences need attribution and which do not?

	Needed	Not Needed	Why?
American cars aren't as good as Japanese cars.	[ ]	[ ]	
Most college athletes are poor students.	[ ]	[ ]	
The oil companies are ripping off the public.	[ ]	[ ]	
Fire destroyed the Desert Mirage Hotel in Las Vegas.	[ ]	[ ]	
A jet crashed at the Midcity Municipal Airport.	[ ]	[ ]	
Three men died in a traffic accident in East Midcity.	[ ]	[ ]	
A short circuit caused the fire.	[ ]	[ ]	
Governor Sorenson signed the bill.	[ ]	[ ]	
The Padres won the game.	[ ]	[ ]	
George Washington was the best President.	[ ]	[ ]	

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### Attribution Words

*Says* and *said* are the most acceptable attribution verbs. Other acceptable, but less frequently used, attribution verbs include *according to*, *adds*, *added*, *reports* and *reported*. Don't worry about coming up with a lot of synonyms for *says* or *said*. Most of the synonyms aren't conversational, and many of them have a tinge of editorial comment associated with them.

**Examples (poor):** *claims*, *asserts*, *declares*, *vows*, *proclaims*, *exclaims*, *points out*, *discloses*, *warns*, *promises*

Of course, if a source really warns, promises or declares, you can report such revelations and use the appropriate attribution verb. Generally, though, sources simply say things, so you should simply say they say things.