



What Is Creative Commons?

Creative Commons is a nonprofit organization that works to increase the amount of creativity (cultural, educational, and scientific content) in “the commons” – the body of work that is available to the public for free and legal sharing, use, repurposing, and remixing.

How Does Creative Commons Work?

Creative Commons provides free, easy-to-use legal tools that give everyone from individual creators to major companies and institutions a simple, standardized way to pre-clear copyrights to creative work they own the copyright to. CC licenses let people easily change their copyright terms from the default of “all rights reserved” to “some rights reserved.”

Creative Commons licenses are not an alternative to copyright. They apply on top of copyright, so you can modify your copyright terms to best suit your needs. We’ve collaborated with copyright experts all around the world to ensure that our licenses work globally.

What Can Creative Commons Do for Me?

If you’ve created something and want people to know that you’re happy to have them share, use, and build upon your work, you should consider publishing under a Creative Commons license. CC’s legal infrastructure gives you flexibility (for example, you can choose to only pre-clear non-commercial uses) and protects the people who use your work (so that they don’t have to worry about copyright infringement, as long as they abide by the terms you have specified).

If you’re an artist, student, educator, scientist, or other creator looking for content that you can freely and legally use, there is a giant pool of CC-licensed creativity available to you. There are many millions of works – from songs and videos to scientific and academic content – that you can use under the terms of our copyright licenses.

Step 1: Review Conditions

Creators choose a set of conditions they wish to apply to their work.



Attribution. You let people copy, distribute, display, perform, and remix your copyrighted work, as long as they give you credit the way you request. All CC licenses contain this property.



Non-Commercial. You let people copy, distribute, display, perform, and remix your work for non-commercial purposes only. If they want to use your work for commercial purposes, they must contact you for permission.



Share Alike. You allow people to create remixes and derivative works based on your creative work, as long as they only distribute them under the same Creative Commons license that your work was published under.



No Derivative Works. You let people copy, distribute, display, and perform only verbatim copies of your work – not make derivative works based upon it. If they want to alter, transform, build upon, or remix your work, they must contact you for permission.

Step 2: Select License

Resulting in a license that indicates how others may use it.



Attribution



Attribution – Share Alike



Attribution – No Derivatives



Attribution – Non-Commercial



Attribution – Non-Commercial – Share Alike



Attribution – Non-Commercial – No Derivatives