



Applying Creative Commons licenses to your educational resources

What is this document?

This is a basic step-by-step guide for people who want to apply Creative Commons (CC) licenses to their educational resources, thus making them *open* educational resources (OER). If you are new to Creative Commons or web publishing, or are uncertain about the steps you need to take to affix a license to your work, then this guide is for you.

Who is it for?

Anyone who does not understand how Creative Commons licenses work or is not sure how to use the CC-hosted license chooser to select a license.



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Attribute to ccLearn with a link to <http://learn.creativecommons.org>.

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Why do I need to worry about Creative Commons licenses for my educational resources? Can't I just put my stuff on the Internet?

Did you know that almost any work you create is automatically protected under copyright law at the *moment* of its creation? You do not have to register this copyright or take any special steps to get it – you receive "all-rights-reserved" copyright automatically once you create a tangible expression of an idea in any medium, including digital works. If you want teachers and learners to be able to freely access, share, translate, and otherwise use your creative resources *legally*, then you should grant potential users a *license* – a set of permissions – to use your works. Creative Commons licenses have become the global standard for open resources of all kinds, and are the most popular licenses for OER. If your intention is to share your work as *open* educational resources, then you should consider using a Creative Commons license.

Please read our reports on this subject (learn.creativecommons.org/productions) as well as the ccLearn FAQ (learn.creativecommons.org/FAQ) in order to learn more about OER and CC licensing.

OK, I have created an educational resource that I would like to license openly for others to use and share. Now what?

There are two primary ways to apply CC licenses to your works. Either you can publish your work to a website that applies a license for you, or you can publish your work yourself and manually apply a license using the CC license chooser. The simpler choice is to publish your work using an online content-sharing service that supports CC licensing. Many of the known services are listed on the Creative Commons site (wiki.creativecommons.org/Content_Directories). We cannot endorse or take any responsibility for the content or practices of any of these or other hosting sites, but here is a list of some of the more popular sites that are available:

Flickr	– Photo sharing.	flickr.com
Connexions	– Lesson plans and learning objects.	cnx.org
Open Learn	– Open educational resources.	www.open.ac.uk/openlearn
Wikieducator	– Wiki-based learning materials.	wikieducator.org
Scivee	– Science-oriented videos.	scivee.tv
Scribd	– Document sharing.	scribd.com
Slideshare	– Slideshows and presentations.	slideshare.com

New services hosting online educational resources are established regularly. We recommend that you examine the content directories as well as the ccLearn-hosted database of educational projects and organizations (ODEPO: opened.creativecommons.org/ODEPO), which will have more complete listings.

What if I don't want to put my educational resources on any of these sites? Is there a way for me to license and publish the work myself?

Yes! This guide provides the steps you need to follow to do just that. Note that if you have a larger collection of resources, or are regularly creating or aggregating many OER, then you are probably better served by integrating the licensing into your distribution site. For more information please see: wiki.creativecommons.org/Web_Integration.

This guide details the actual steps involved in using the license chooser. Once you have selected a license, the next step of properly marking your work can be complicated, depending on the nature of the work you are licensing and your ability to edit the HTML of the web page containing your resources. This guide includes some basic instructions for the actual process of marking up your work; however, we encourage you to browse the [ccLearn FAQ](#) for additional details or to contact ccLearn directly with questions.

Turn the page to begin licensing your works!



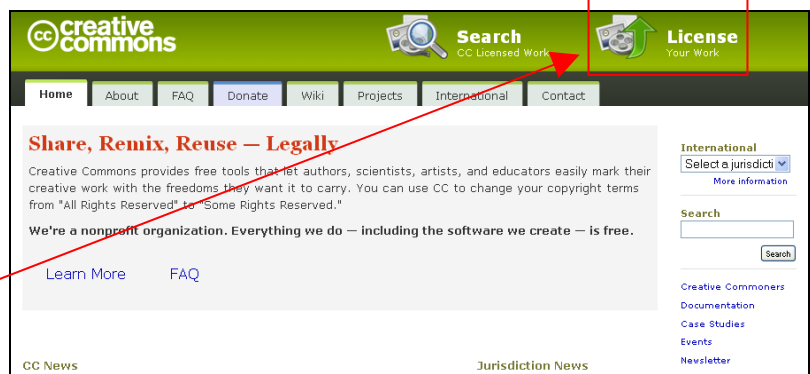
Step 1

Go to the Creative Commons website at:

<http://creativecommons.org>.

Step 2

In the upper right-hand corner, click on the “[License your work](#)” icon.



Step 3

On the left side, you will see a section entitled “License Your Work.” Under that heading, there is a box where you are asked two questions, each with specific answers to choose from.

Question 1: Allow commercial uses of your work?

If you answer “Yes,” then you will not get a license with the Non-Commercial (NC) restriction.

If you answer “No,” then you will get a license with the NC restriction.

For additional information regarding the NC term, please look at the [ccLearn FAQ](#).

Question 2: Allow modifications of your work?

If you answer “Yes,” then you will get a license with neither the No Derivatives (ND) restriction nor the Share-Alike (SA) restriction.

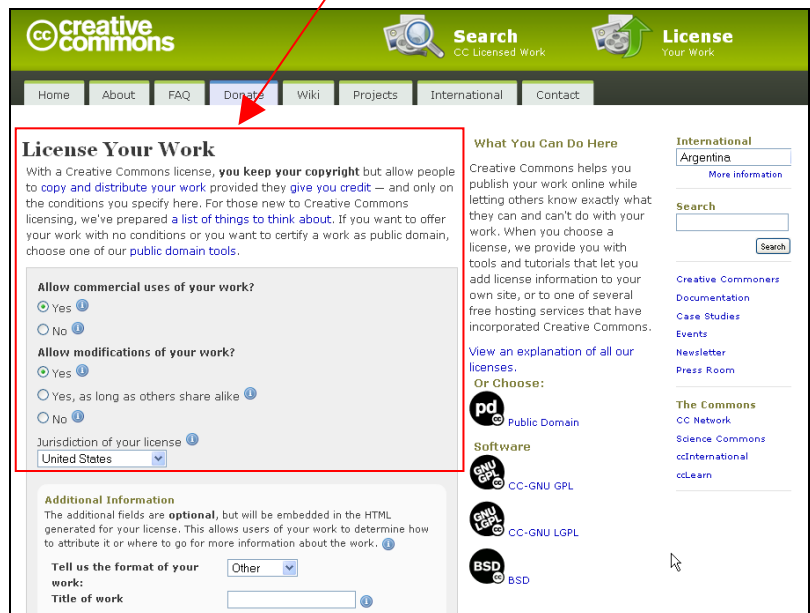
If you answer “No,” then you will get a license with the ND restriction.

If you answer “Yes, as long as others share-alike,” then you will get a license with the SA restriction.

For additional information regarding the ND and SA terms, please look at the [ccLearn FAQ](#).

You then need to indicate the *jurisdiction of your license*. The global standard license is called Unported, which is encoded as “None of the above,” the last item in the list. Note that all of the licenses, regardless of the assigned jurisdiction, are in force worldwide. In other words, it is not possible to select a license that is only applicable in a single country (or jurisdiction). For more information about jurisdictions and this choice, please consult the [ccLearn FAQ](#).

Based on your choices here, you will be assigned one of the Creative Commons licenses for your work.



Step 4

Continuing down the “License Your Work” section, you will see that you are asked to provide “Additional Information.” This information makes it very easy for people to give you credit when they use your work. It can also be used by search engines to make your work much easier to discover on the Internet. If you have any questions about any of the fields, click on the “i” next to each item. Note that adding this information is optional but strongly encouraged.

Whether you fill in any of the optional fields or not, you must then press the “Select a License” button at the bottom of the section.

Additional Information
The additional fields are **optional**, but will be embedded in the HTML generated for your license. This allows users of your work to determine how to attribute it or where to go for more information about the work. ⓘ

Tell us the format of your work: ⓘ

Title of work: ⓘ

Attribute work to name: ⓘ

Attribute work to URL: ⓘ

Source work URL: ⓘ

More permissions URL: ⓘ




Select a License

Step 5

When you press the “Select a License” button, you will get a screen that looks much like the one on the right. The license that appears will depend on the choices you made previously. You will always receive several different license logos, each of which can be used to quickly mark your work for possible users. You should use whichever logo you prefer. Note that two of the logos (the first and third) contain visual cues about the specific license you chose, whereas one logo (the middle one) does not. By clicking on the radio button under a logo, the HTML code shown under the heading “What to do next,” will change to reflect your choice.

Here is the license you've chosen

You have selected the Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 United States License. [See how the license will look to your site's visitors.](#)

What to do next

Have your own website?
Copy the text below to your Web site to let your visitors know what license applies to your works.

```
<a rel="license" href="http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/us/"></a><br /><span xmlns:dc="http://purl.org/dc/elements/1.1/" href="http://purl.org/dc/dcmitype/Text" property="dc:title" rel="dc:type">Step by Step Guide</span> by <a href="http://www.creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/us/">Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 United States License</a>
```

Select the contents of the box above and copy it. Or, have it [emailed to yourself](#).

Need more help? [Read our tutorial](#).

After publishing your license, please consider [supporting Creative Commons](#).

Step 6

Once you have selected a license (steps 1-5), you need to take some specific actions which will depend on the format (e.g., web page, video, or PDF) of the work you are licensing and whether you are publishing on the web or offline.

For web-based publications:

We strongly recommend that you add licensing information to the web page where you have published your material. This is true whether or not the material itself is formatted in HTML, embedded in the web page (e.g., video), or linked from the web page for download (e.g., PDF). You need to copy the HTML you receive upon choosing a license and paste it into the web page that is hosting your resources. Each licensed object should have license information associated with it, if there is more than one educational object on a page under different licenses. The HTML provided can simply be inserted into the HTML that specifies the design of the page. For example, if you are using web-publishing software, you should be able to toggle to the “code” view and then just paste the licensing HTML in directly.

If all of the resources you are publishing on a single website are licensed under the same CC license, you can often copy the HTML from the license chooser and paste it into your website's template (e.g., in a footer or sidebar area). After saving the template, the chosen license information should appear everywhere on your site.

Whether you have added license information to a single page or an entire site, once live on the Internet, the license information will be displayed and the machines will be able to detect the license status automatically, so there is nothing else for you to do.

Note that this process is roughly equivalent to what happens when you publish your resources with one of the previously mentioned online services – in that case the service adds the license information for you to pages on the site that host your licensed materials.

For audio, video, PDF, paper and other publications:

We recommend publishing a web page with licensing information about your material (see above), even if the material is primarily distributed offline or otherwise outside of the context of your web pages. Doing so ensures that your materials can be found by search engines and other web discovery tools.

We *also* recommend including a visible license notice in the video, PDF, paper, or other publication itself. This recommendation becomes a requirement when the work's primary distribution is offline.

The easiest way to mark your works in this manner is to click on the link indicated in the screenshot to the right (“Mark a document not on the web, [add this text](#) to your work”).

You can also right-click on any of the image icons and “Copy image,” which you can then “Paste” onto your work next to the text of the license.

You can mark any visible work in this manner, with placement in a format-appropriate to the medium; e.g., the title page, footer, or back cover of a PDF or paper document, or the pre-roll or credits of a video.

Some document creation applications also have extensions available that will help you add a visible license notice to your documents, most notably OpenOffice (extensions.services.openoffice.org/project/ccooo) and Microsoft Office (ccaddin2007.codeplex.com).

Obviously audio-only content is a special case, but only in that notice that can be discerned by humans must be audible rather than visual – an audible notice may be included at the beginning or end of a

The screenshot shows the Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 United States license chooser interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for Home, About, FAQ, Donate, Wiki, Projects, International, and Contact. Below the navigation bar, the page displays the selected license: Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 United States. A red arrow points to the 'Offline Work?' section, which contains the text: 'Mark a document not on the web, add this text to your work.' The 'Optional next steps' section includes links to 'Register your work with the CC Network' and 'Track use of your work with FairShare'.

sound file just as a visual notice might be included in a video's pre-roll or credits. If it is not possible or is undesirable to include an audible license notice in audio-only materials, it becomes even more important to publish a corresponding web page or license information in printed materials that accompany your audio materials.

Additional information

These concepts can be complicated, so if you have further questions, please browse the ccLearn FAQ (learn.creativecommons.org/FAQ) or contact the ccLearn staff (cclearn-info@creativecommons.org) for clarification.