



## DIGITAL RULES RESOURCE CENTER

### Guide to Creative Commons Licenses

In general, work belongs to the creator who produced it and cannot be used by another party without proper permission and/or payment of a fee. When creating your movies, it is simplest to use only what you create. However, many publications, photographs and productions are licensed under the Creative Commons which allow media creators like yourselves to use, adapt, alter and share this outside work in your own work. In general, **scientists, academics, educators, musicians and photographers** often license their work for use under the Creative Commons licensing mode.

Creative Commons (CC) “is a nonprofit organization that enables the sharing and use of creativity and knowledge through free legal tools.” Since it’s founding in 2001, they have estimated that there are well over 400 million CC licensed works. When creators seek a Creative Commons license for a piece of their work, they are giving anyone and everyone permission to use it, but there can be conditions.

At its most restrictive, if something has a Creative Commons license, it means you can use the media as long as you:

1. Credit the creator;
2. Keep your work for non-commercial use only; and
3. Do not modify the work.

There are variations of the Creative Commons license that allow you to change a work or share it. To find out more about the details of the different licenses, go to <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/>.

To find existing media resources that already have obtained Creative Commons licenses (and therefore may be available for you to use in your Challenge), go to <http://search.creativecommons.org/>. Here, you can enter a term into the search bar and choose the engine with which you want to search. For example,

if you want to find a video clip that has a Creative Commons license, first press the “YouTube” button and then enter the term to search.

Here is another way to access works that are licensed for use under the Creative Commons. As taken from their website:

If you’re looking for content that you can freely and legally use, there is a giant pool of CC-licensed creativity available to you. There are hundreds of millions of works — from [songs](#) and [videos](#) to [scientific](#) and [academic](#) material — available to the public for free and legal use under the terms of our copyright licenses, with more being contributed every day.

If you would like to see what kinds of companies and organizations are using Creative Commons licenses, visit our [Who Uses CC?](#) page.

**HOWEVER**, make sure you verify that the content you find actually does have a Creative Commons license. As stated in the paragraph on the bottom left of the search page, you cannot always assume that this is the case:

CC has no control over the results that are returned. *Do not assume that the results displayed in this search portal are under a CC license.* You should always verify that the work is actually under a CC license by following the link. Since there is no registration to use a CC license, CC has no way to determine what has and hasn't been placed under the terms of a CC license. If you are in doubt you should contact the copyright holder directly, or try to contact the site where you found the content.