

# The Web is Not Free: Finding and Using Share-Licensed Content

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Text and photos on the internet are not automatically free to use. **Most web content** is copyrighted and therefore **cannot be used** in your work for this class.

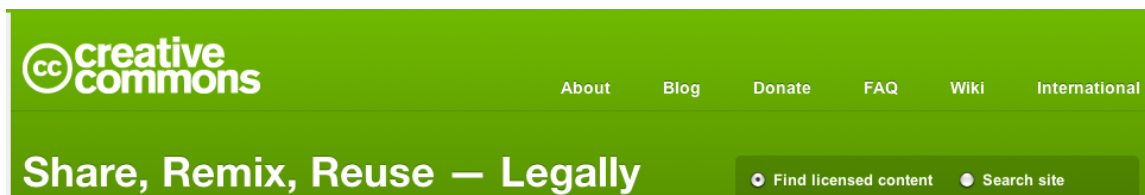
There is a robust open-licensing movement, however, focused around Creative Commons ([creativecommons.org](http://creativecommons.org)). This movement aims to make materials on the internet available for creative work.

You should produce most of the multimedia you use in your assignments yourself. But share-licensed work will be allowed in certain assignments. You will get specific instructions on each assignment.

**Every time you use share-licensed material**, you must identify the creator of the work, the type of license, and a link to the original – either in a caption, a credit in your video or webpage, or in the information accompanying your YouTube video.

## What is Creative Commons?

Basically, it's an online version of your kindergarten teacher: it tries to get us all to play nicely together and share our toys. It's a licensing scheme that enables anyone on the web to say: "OK, you can borrow my photos/videos/text. But you can only use it in certain ways, and you have to give me credit."



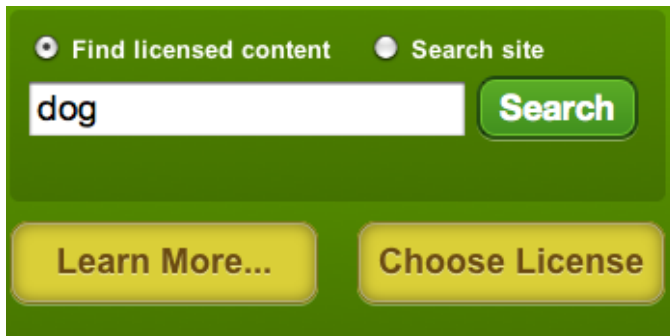
There are different levels of Creative Commons license. These allow the owner/creator of the content to decide:

- Whether the work can be used to make a profit (in advertisements, etc.)
- Whether it can be altered
- How the work should be attributed

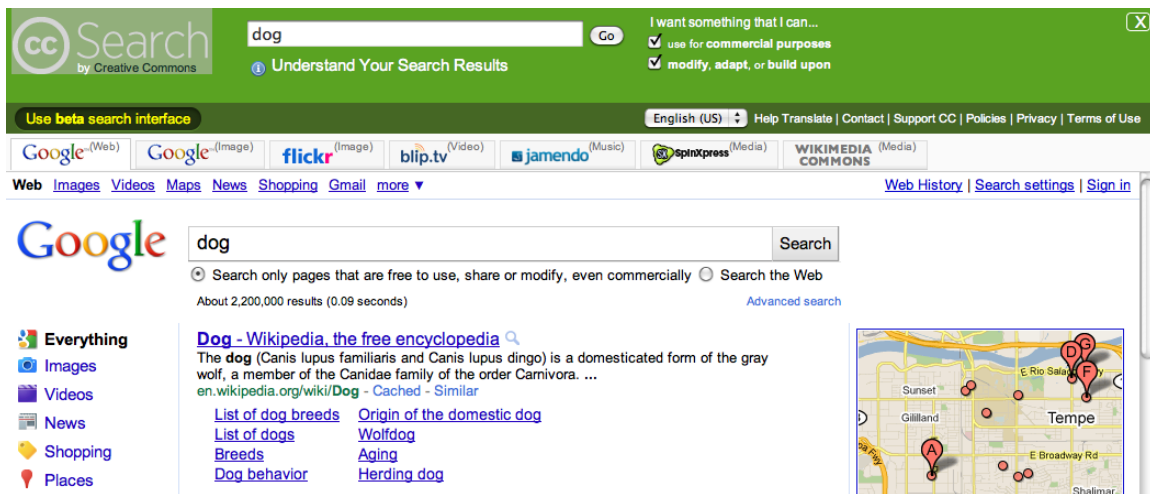
## Searching Creative Commons

You can search for content at [creativecommons.org](http://creativecommons.org), but it's kind of awkward and confusing.

When you use their search box, make sure Find Licensed Content is turned on.



You'll get taken to a big messy Google results page.



You can navigate using the Google links down the left side or the tabs across the top (flickr, blip.tv, etc.).

There are two problems with this search:

1. It's unnecessarily limiting because it searches only for content that is free to modify and use commercially. A lot of people are happy to share their stuff but they don't want it modified or used commercially.
2. It includes YouTube videos, which is mystifying, because YouTube hasn't fully embraced Creative Commons licensing and everyone knows it is packed with copyright violations.

Thus, you may find it easier to search the affiliated sites directly.

## Searching Flickr, Jamendo, and other sites

Some of the most useful sites that share-license content are:

### Photos

**Flickr.com:** use their Advanced Search to look for CC-licensed content.

- You're not using it commercially, so you don't have to click the first box.
- You shouldn't be doing a lot of modification either, so you don't need to check the second box – but if you decide to crop the photo or do significant color and contrast modification, you should only use photos licensed to modify, adapt, or build upon.



*Tip: Find content with a Creative Commons license.*  
[Learn more...](#)

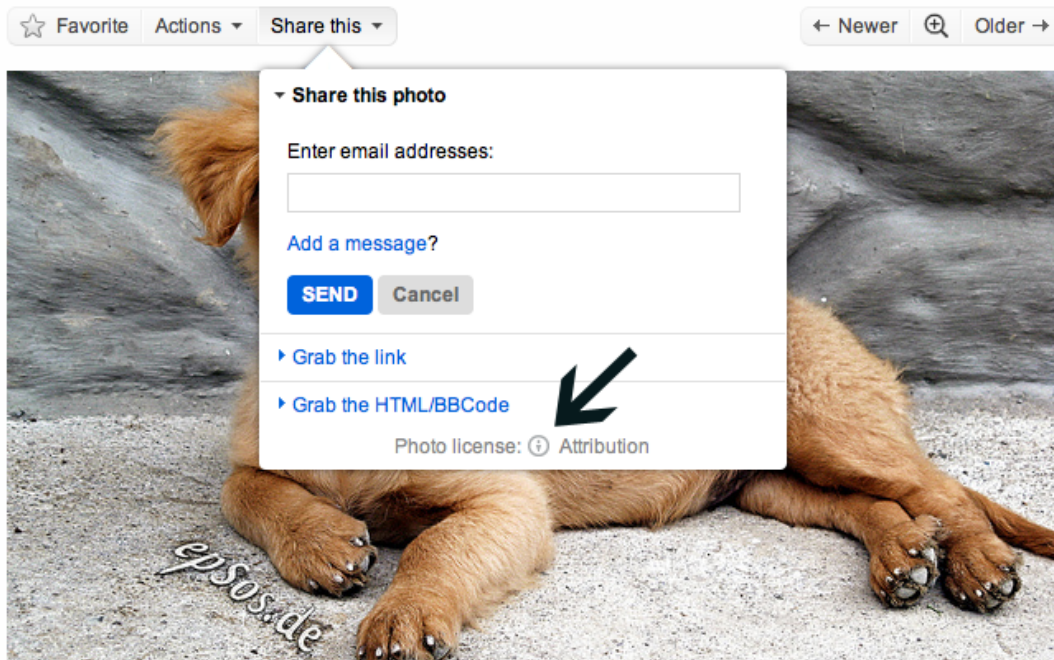
☒ Only search within **Creative Commons**-licensed content

☐ Find content to use commercially

☐ Find content to modify, adapt, or build upon

Some flickr content is copyrighted – so **check the license** on each photo before you use it. To find the license:

- Click on Share this
- Click on the little circle at the bottom of the dropdown box (why is this key link hidden in a tiny dot? That's one of those eternal mysteries of the web).



## Music

**Jamendo.com**

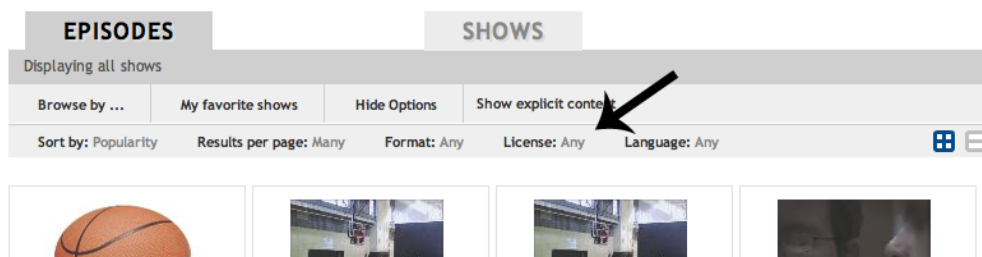
**Freesound.org**

These sites are dedicated to shareable sound – yippee! Just credit the artist, song title and website.

## Video

**Blip.tv**

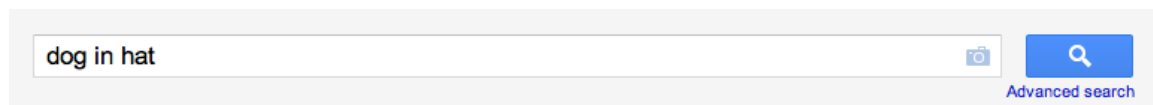
You can filter any Blip search by license. Choose Creative Commons and, as always, credit the creator of the work as well as the website.



## Various Media (Photo, Video, Audio)

**Google**

You can search directly on Google for share-licensed material. The easiest way: Enter your search term and choose images from the left-hand menu. Now select Advanced search, right under the magnifying-glass icon.



Near the bottom of that screen is a section called Usage rights. Select Only images labeled for reuse.

### Need more tools?

Usage rights:

- ☐ All images, regardless of license labeling
- ☒ Only images labeled for reuse. Conditions might apply. [More info](#)
  - Also limit to images labeled for:
    - ☐ Commercial use
    - ☐ Modification

Google messes up sometimes and lists copyright-protected items as share-licensed, so double-check once you get to the page. Cite the specific type of license (“Creative Commons”), not just “Flickr”.

## Wikimedia Commons

commons.wikimedia.org

This Wikipedia project is a treasure trove of multimedia. The photos are often of high quality. Everything here is free-use, but some is licensed under Creative Commons, some under another scheme run by Gnu, and some is public domain. Just look near the bottom of the page to find out licensing and attribution information.

## Got Doubts?

If you can't tell whether the material you've found is share-licensed, look at the bottom of the web page. That's where copyright information often is. If you don't see any, assume it's copyrighted and **don't use it**. For big companies, try looking for a Media page where they may make photos available for articles and blogs.

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*Apple copyright from the bottom of apple.com*

## Sample Credits:



*Video*

## Header credit

Globe graphic by ilco at stock.xchg:

<http://www.sxc.hu/photo/1097858>

*Blog header*



*Understanding cultural norms such as greeting rituals is seen as a sign of respect. Photo by Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training (CARAT) on Flickr <http://www.flickr.com/photos/carat-clwp/5712815945/> under Creative Commons license.*