

ANATOMY OF A CREATIVE COMMONS LICENSE



OFFICE OF SCHOLARLY COMMUNICATION

What is a CC license?



A Creative Commons (CC) license is a tool to help both content creators and end users make the best use of copyright material. The licenses work alongside traditional copyright and allow content creators to specify exactly how they wish others to use their work.

Using a simple formula, a CC license allows creators to build a license which suits their needs. It is an example of an open license which is designed to encourage use of materials and advance knowledge.

Using a license such as Creative Commons allows researchers to get more exposure for their work whilst at the same time maintaining control over its use and helping to avoid copyright infringement.

Layers of the license

Each CC license contains three layers which make up the license as a whole. The layers are aimed at different audiences which may need to know about how a work should be used.

It can help to think of the licenses like layers in a cake:

Machine readable (the cake layer): the level aimed at computers. This layer is easily read by software like apps and search engines

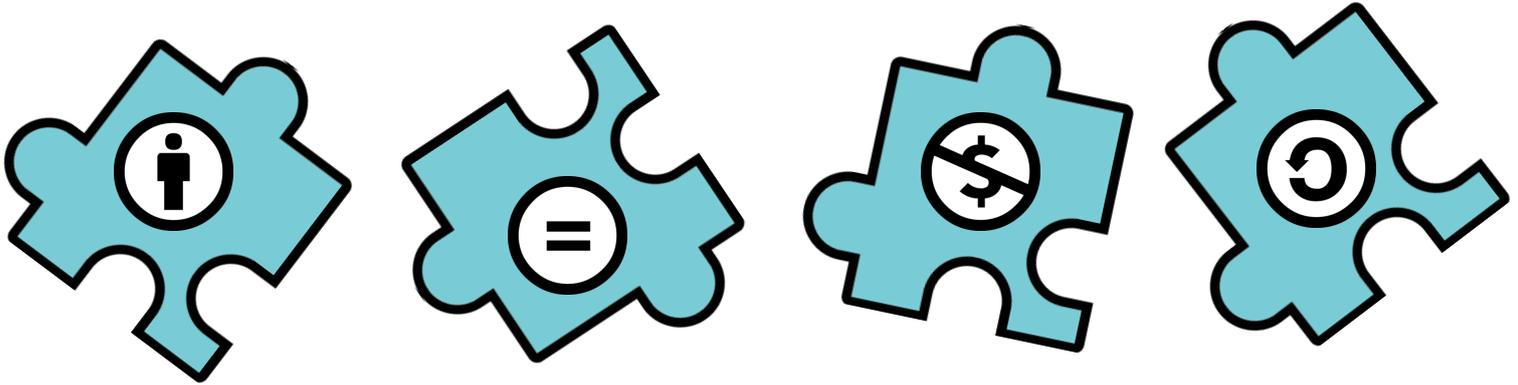
Legal code (the cream filling): the lawyer readable Ts & Cs. This layer contains information about the license which is legally enforceable

Common deeds (the icing on top): the human readable version of each licence. This layer is designed to provide a clear summary of the legal code



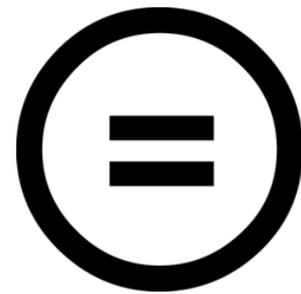
Jigsaw licenses

You can also think of a Creative Commons license as a jigsaw. Each piece is important and together they can be assembled to create a bigger picture.



Attribution

Must acknowledge the author of the work. ALL of the licenses contain this element



No-derivatives

Cannot share changes to or remixes of the work. TWO licenses contain this element



NonCommercial

Works can only be used for noncommercial uses. THREE licenses contain this element



ShareAlike

New creations must be shared under the same licence as the original work. TWO licenses contain this element

Putting the pieces together

When you put the puzzle together you can create a bespoke license. These licenses help would-be users to understand what they can do with the work.



CC BY

Attribution. You are free to distribute, remix, tweak and build upon the work as long as the original author is credited



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