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The following guide provides answers to common copyright questions.

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Copyright Guide



Welcome to the University of Michigan's Guide to Copyright.

Copyright law is complicated, and for good or for ill, increasingly important in scholarship and academia. The following guide seeks to provide answers to frequently asked questions, help authors learn effectively to use and enforce their rights, and to demystify copyright law as much as possible.

Table of Contents for this Guide

[Using Copyright](#) -- Answers questions about how to use copyrighted materials.

[Copyright Components](#) -- Offers an overview about copyright by responding to basic copyright questions.

[CTOOLS](#) -- Addresses the questions about using copyrighted material in CTOOLS.

[Fair Use and Other Exceptions](#) -- Explains the exceptions to copyright rules which might grant use to copyrighted materials.

[Requesting Permission](#) -- Defines what permissions are and how you can get them if necessary.


[Resource Links](#) -- Offers additional links and information pertaining to copyright.

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If you are using any sort of material that you yourself did not create, you need to think carefully about copyright. Using someone else's copyrighted material without permission could constitute copyright infringement, an illegal and unethical act that violates not only US law but also the Aggie Honor Code, as well as other professional and research standards of conduct.

To comply with copyright law and with standards for ethical conduct, you need to do one of three things:

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- Use materials that are free of copyright restrictions because they are in the public domain, or they are published with an open license for use OR
- Obtain permission for your use from the copyright holder.

How do you know what approach to take in your particular situation? That's what this Guide is designed to help with. Here you will find some brief explanations of key copyright concepts as well as resources for learning more.

Ultimately, each Aggie makes his or her own decision as to whether, or how, to use copyrighted works in a legal and ethical way. The information and resources are offered here to provide helpful and reliable information you can use to make that decision.


Please click on the tabs above to learn more.

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