Best Practices for Avoiding Copyright Violation  
An excerpt from the Cleveland Community College Copyright Compliance Manual

These practices will help you avoid copyright violations while providing excellent online materials and resources to your students.

Use material that is not protected by copyright
To enhance your online classes and presentations try searching for material that is in the public domain. This includes items for which copyright has expired, been given up, or is not applicable. To get you started the website Public Domain Sherpa has links to great sources for books, maps, photos, sheet music, and sound recordings that are in the public domain.

Most works produced by the U.S. government are not eligible for copyright. Try USA.gov’s Government Photos and Images for links to graphic materials on a wide variety of topics. You’ll find some great sources of materials like GRIN: Great Images in NASA.

Public Domain Sherpa also has links to some excellent sources of public domain recordings, including the sound recording collections in the Library of Congress (LOC) American Memory Project. The LOC also maintains National Jukebox with over 10,000 historical sound recordings made freely available.

The Internet Archive’s Moving Images Archive contains over a million movies and clips in digital format. Items in this collection were uploaded by Archive members, and many are available for free upload.

Internet Archive also includes the Prelinger Archives, which provides access to approximately 5,000 digitized titles that were originally on film. The items in this collection are considered to be of historic significance and unavailable elsewhere.

A source for public domain video is Openflix, a collection of movies that are commonly thought to be in the public domain or for which the copyright holder gives permission for use.

Not everything on all these sites is totally free of copyright restrictions so be sure to read any fine print. In some cases the creator of the work just wants you to include a citation to give them credit. That’s a small price to pay for great material, and you are setting an excellent example for your students.

Use Direct Links
If you want your students to read or view something that is already on the internet just create a link to the material. This saves time, and if you are only providing a link you are not violating copyright. As an example, we’re providing a link to a copyrighted page titled “Know Your Copy Rights” which we can legally do. This document provides some valuable information about using material without seeking permission or paying a fee.

There has been some concern about the practice of “deep linking” or creating a link deep into a website and avoiding the main page. This issue applies primarily to commercial sites because you might be avoiding advertisements on the main page. If you want to point your students deep into a commercial website you should get permission from the webmaster of that page.

The drawback to providing links rather than making copies is that you will need to check regularly to make sure your links are still valid. Websites can move or disappear completely.

Never post copyrighted items on the Web
When using the “Fair Use” exemption with materials you are providing in your traditional or online class it is important that you limit access to only the students in the class for which the material is used to meet
your objectives. This basically means you should not post copyrighted items on a public website. Provide access through Blackboard so only the students in your class will have access to the material.

Limited amounts of copyrighted video material can be provided to your students through the CCC video server. See the “Request to Stream Copyrighted Material” form for more details.

**Use material that is specifically licensed for you by the College**
The Library maintains licenses to a wide variety of databases and online resources that you can use to complement and enhance the teaching/learning experience. While the licenses do not generally allow you to make copies of articles and reference materials to post in your classes, most provide the ability for you to create direct links which you can provide to your students. For more information about creating links to material located in subscription databases or collections contact the Instruction/Reference Librarian in the Rose Library.

The Rose Library provides access to several excellent photo collections that are royalty free for educational, non-commercial uses as well as to several databases with video material that can be used in traditional classes or linked to for online students. To find out more about these subscriptions and how the images and videos can be used see one of the College librarians.

**Use material from the NCLOR**
The North Carolina Learning Object Repository (NCLOR) provides access to a wide array of digital learning resources such as documents, audio/video files, simulations, and assessments that can be used in traditional and online classes. The Repository is managed by the NCCCS, and as stated on their website, “the mission of the NCLOR is to provide a centralized location for the acquisition, collection, sharing, and management of quality learning resources for all teachers in North Carolina.” ([North Carolina Learning Object Repository](http://nclor.org). Raleigh, NC: NCCCS. Web. 29 Apr. 2013.)

Most of the items included in the NCLOR are published with Creative Commons licensing and can be modified to meet your particular instructional needs.

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All the audio clips on the collaborative website [www.Freesound.org](http://www.Freesound.org) have Creative Commons licensing so they can be downloaded for use in your projects.

**Search for Open Educational Resources**
As defined by the [Hewlett Foundation](http://www.HewlettFoundation.org), open educational resources (OERs) are materials for teaching, learning, and research that are either in the public domain or have been published using an intellectual property license that allows for free use or re-purposing by others. OERs can be full courses, course materials, modules, textbooks, videos, tests, and other resources that support learning.

[OER Commons](http://www.OERCommons.org) contains over 31,000 learning object that could be useful in post-secondary education, including textbooks, simulations, video lectures, and games.
Create your own learning resources
With a little time, some imagination, and various tools provided by the College you can create learning resources tailored to the learning outcomes you hope to achieve. Take photos. Record lectures for your online classes. Create videos, slide shows, and other learning objects. And when you have created something special think about sharing it with others through Creative Commons licensing.