

# OER Primer Contents

## [Open Educational Resources](#)

[Overview](#)

[Types of OER](#)

["Open" vs. "free"](#)

[What are open licenses?](#)

[The 5 Rs](#)

[The CARE framework](#)

[Finding & evaluating OER](#)

[Finding OERs](#)

[Evaluating OERs](#)

[Your responsibilities](#)

## [BEST PRACTICES FOR ATTRIBUTIONS](#)

[Attribution statements](#)

[Should items in the public domain be attributed?](#)

[Title, author, source, license](#)

[Title](#)

[Author](#)

[Source](#)

[License](#)

[Examples of attribution](#)

[Attributing unmodified works](#)

[Attributing modified or derivative works](#)

[Attributing multiple sources](#)

[Attribution in specific media](#)

[Where do you place the attribution?](#)

[Tips & tricks](#)

[Other open licenses](#)

[Attribution vs. citation](#)

[Important reminders](#)

## [Open Education](#)

[Instructional Design](#)

[Universal Design for Learning \(UDL\)](#)

[Accessibility](#)

[Pressbooks](#)

[H5P](#)

[Editing](#)

[Project Management](#)

[Professionalism](#)

# Open Educational Resources

## Section Contents

## Objectives

## Overview

Open educational resources (OER) are teaching, learning and research materials in any medium – digital or otherwise – that reside in the public domain or have been released under an open license that permits no-cost access, use, adaptation, and redistribution by others with no or limited restrictions.

These often include digital textbooks, which are created and distributed free of charge, and allow users to keep and modify the files as they choose. OER have the potential to reduce or eliminate the costs of textbooks and to increase opportunities for access, participation, and achievement for all students.

## Types of OER

When we talk about OER, we're often talking about open textbooks. And it's true that open textbooks are an important component of OER as a movement- but they're certainly not the *only* component!

OER can be any type of educational material. Their scale varies from something as large as a textbook or online course, to something as small as a class handout or image.

## "Open" vs. "free"

Before we go any further discussing what OER are, it's important to pause for a moment to address what OERs are not. Specifically, we want to debunk a common misconception: "free" and "open" are *not* the same thing.

Free materials serve a meaningful purpose in education by providing tools to support teaching and learning, but free resources are not necessarily open resources. "Free" means that there is no required cost to access materials. However, it does not mean that users may also reuse, modify, or share the materials.

When a resource is open, users know they can reuse and share the resource widely, so long as they abide by the terms of the creator. Open materials also allow users to revise and remix them with other open resources or self-generated content to produce new material. These terms and permissions are typically established in the work's license.

## What are open licenses?

Open licenses support creators that want to share their works freely, and allow other users more flexibility to reuse and share the creators' works. Specific benefits include:

- Allowing others to distribute the work freely, which in turn promotes wider circulation than if an individual or group retained the exclusive right to distribute;
- Reducing or eliminating the need for others to ask for permission to use or share the work, which can be time consuming, especially if the work has many authors;
- Encouraging others to continuously improve and add value to the work; and
- Encouraging others to create new works based on the original work – e.g. translations, adaptations, or works with a different scope or focus.

Text is a derivative of [Guide to Open Licensing](#) by [Open Knowledge International](#), licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

OERs are not copyright-free, but rather are generally available for use under Creative Commons or similar open licenses. These licenses grant permission to Retain, Reuse, Revise, Remix, and Redistribute resources.

There are six creative commons licenses, ranging from most open to least open.

Attribution

CC BY

This license lets others distribute, remix, tweak, and build upon your work, even commercially, as long as they credit you for the original creation. This is

the most accommodating of licenses offered. Recommended for maximum dissemination and use of licensed materials.

Attribution-ShareAlike

CC BY-SA

This license lets others remix, tweak, and build upon your work even for commercial purposes, as long as they credit you and license their new creations under the identical terms. This license is often compared to “copyleft” free and open source software licenses. All new works based on yours will carry the same license, so any derivatives will also allow commercial use. This is the license used by Wikipedia, and is recommended for materials that would benefit from incorporating content from Wikipedia and similarly licensed projects.

Attribution-NoDerivs

CC BY-ND

This license lets others reuse the work for any purpose, including commercially; however, it cannot be shared with others in adapted form, and credit must be provided to you.

Attribution-NonCommercial

CC BY-NC

This license lets others remix, tweak, and build upon your work non-commercially, and although their new works must also acknowledge you

and be non-commercial, they don't have to license their derivative works on the same terms.

Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike

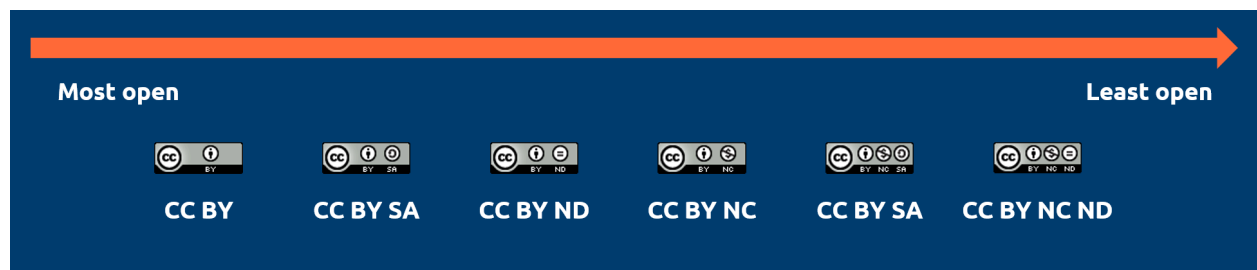
CC BY-NC-SA

This license lets others remix, tweak, and build upon your work non-commercially, as long as they credit you and license their new creations under the identical terms.

Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs

CC BY-NC-ND

This license is the most restrictive of our six main licenses, only allowing others to download your works and share them with others as long as they credit you, but they can't change them in any way or use them commercially.

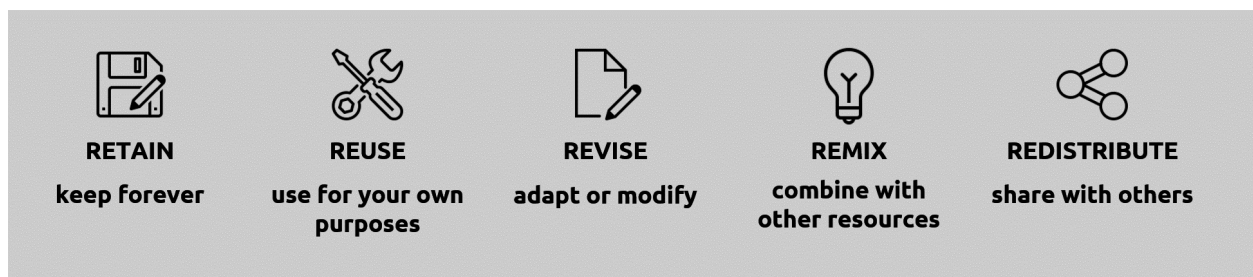


## The 5 Rs

The “5 Rs” is a framework that encourages educators to capitalize on the unique rights associated with open content. These rights include the ability to:

- Retain: Make and own copies of the work (e.g., download, duplicate, store, and manage).
- Reuse: Use the work in a wide range of ways (e.g., in a class, in a study group, on a website, in a video).
- Revise: Adapt, modify and translate the work (e.g., translate the content into another language).
- Remix: Combine it with another resource to make a new work (e.g., incorporate the content into a mashup).
- Redistribute: Share the work with others (e.g., give a copy of the content to a friend).

These rights, or permissions, are made possible through open licensing. For example, Creative Commons open licences help creators of OER retain copyright while allowing others to reproduce, distribute, and make some uses of their work.



Attribution: The 5 Rs of OER is a derivative of the [5 R Permissions of OER](#) by [Lumen Learning](#), licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#). [About the licenses](#) by [Creative Commons](#) is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#). Infographic icons by [icons8.com](#).

## The CARE framework

The CARE Framework, as proposed by Petrides, Levin, and Watson (2018), has been developed to help articulate the shared values and collective vision for OER advocacy on campuses. Because of its ability to link a variety of stakeholders in traditional/formal and non-traditional/informal settings, the framework provides the flexibility needed for those who are new to open education, along with those who are early adopters, to participate on an equal footing.

The CARE framework suggests a four-pronged series of practices that can inform strategies and tactics for OER adoption over time:

- **Contribute:** Stakeholders actively contribute to efforts, whether financially or via in-kind contributions, to advance the awareness, improvement, and distribution of OERs
- **Attribute:** Stakeholders practice conspicuous attribution, ensuring that all who create or remix OERs are properly and clearly credited for their contributions
- **Release:** Stakeholders ensure OERs can be released and used beyond the course and platform in which it was created or delivered
- **Empower:** Stakeholders are inclusive and strive to meet the diverse needs of all learners, including by supporting the participation of new and non-traditional voices in OER creation and adoption

Attribution: Adapted from [Toward a Sustainable OER Ecosystem: The Case for OER Stewardship](#), by Petrides, Levin, and Watson (2018), licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License](#).

EDIT



## Finding & evaluating OER

The bulk of the work for this week and next will revolve around finding and evaluating OERs, and strategies to help you do both.

There is no “one-stop-shop” for OERs, so you need to look in multiple places. The good news is, there are several curated OER repositories that have organized content for you to search. Many of these resources have also been peer reviewed and even rated by other users. You’ll find a list of open repositories in [Your OER Quest](#) activity.

### Finding OERs

Here are some handy tips to keep in mind as you begin searching for OERs

- Start with open repositories, “shop around,” and keep coming back! Make sure to access different repositories, and continue checking them because they are always growing and being updated.
- Use Boolean operators. Not sure what those are? Check out the [Savvy Searching](#) module!
- Use filters within the repositories to find more relevant results (e.g. filter the results by license, type of material, etc.)
- Switch up your search terms! Come up with a list of keywords and try them out
- Look for smaller pieces of content as opposed to complete resources (e.g. consider topics, chapters, or ancillary materials instead of a finished textbook)
- Pay attention to the open license so you know how you can use the material you find

- Keep track of information as you search! Check out our [OER Curator](#) if you need a guide
- Know when to stop searching! Sometimes the perfect OER just doesn't exist, and that's okay. Now you can think about creating the missing component that you need, or using a library resource
- When in doubt, ask a librarian!!

## Evaluating OERs

The OER evaluation process might seem intimidating, especially if you're new to the open resources. It can help to start with the familiar, and treat OERs like you would any other teaching resource! When you are evaluating a resource to use in your teaching, open or not, what criteria do you consider?

Knowing your personal evaluation criteria is an excellent starting point, but there are some evaluation criteria that are unique to OERs.

As you find existing openly licensed content that you are interested in adapting or integrating into your own OER, consider the following review criteria. Does anything in particular grab your attention? What evaluation criteria will be critical for your OER?

## Your responsibilities

As always, the faculty member who is selecting the content has to take responsibility for making sure that it is appropriate to the audience and learning objectives, correct and accurate, accessible and usable, and so on. The educator as content expert has always been expected to be vigilant with

educational resources, even ones that come from traditionally authoritative sources.

OERs can fall short of formally published educational materials in terms of their level of polish, but you don't have to just deal with it. You can tweak and polish them until they fit perfectly. That is not something that is possible with traditionally published educational materials, which are copyrighted and often have DRM (digital rights management).

## BEST PRACTICES FOR ATTRIBUTIONS



### Attribution statements

You might have noticed that all the Creative Commons licenses you explored have one common element: they include “CC BY”, or attribution requirements. In a CC BY licence, the “CC” stands for “Creative Commons” and the “BY” stands for “Attribution,” or who the work is “by.”

An attribution statement is used to provide credit to the original creator; its purpose is similar to a citation. (However, attributions and citations are not the same thing! We'll speak more on this later.)

Attribution statements ensure that readers and users are clear on who created what – your audience should not be misled to believe you are the original creator of a licensed work. When using text from another open educational

resource, it is important to be clear in your attribution statement what section of your own resource contains this information.

## Should items in the public domain be attributed?

Resources for which copyright has been designated to the public domain by the creator do not require that attribution be given to the creator. However, as a best practice, we encourage still crediting the author or artist for the resources they created. Taking this extra step does several things:

- It shows respect provides recognition for the individual who created and freely shared their creation.
- It upholds academic integrity.
- It ensures consistency in how a course resource is styled.
- It leaves no doubt that the resource is open for use and provides future users with links and other information about the resource's origins.

## Title, author, source, license

A good rule of thumb is to use the acronym TASL, which stands for Title, Author, Source, License.



### Title

What is the name of the material? If a title was provided for the material, include it. Sometimes a title is not provided; in that case, don't worry about it.

## Author

Who owns the material? Name the author or authors of the material in question. Sometimes, the licensor may want you to give credit to some other entity, like a company or pseudonym. In rare cases, the licensor may not want to be attributed at all. In all of these cases, just do what they request.

## Source

Where can I find it? Since you somehow accessed the material, you know where to find it. Provide the source of the material so others can, too. Since we live in the age of the Internet, this is usually a URL or hyperlink where the material resides.

## License

How can I use it? You are obviously using the material for free thanks to the CC license, so make note of it. Don't just say the material is Creative Commons, because that says nothing about how the material can actually be used. Remember that there are six different CC licenses; which one is the material under? Name and provide a link to it.

If the licensor included a license notice with more information, include that as well.

Lastly, is there anything else I should know before I use it?

When you accessed the material originally did it come with any copyright notices; a notice that refers to the disclaimer of warranties; or a notice of previous modifications? (That was a mouthful!) Because that kind of legal mumbo jumbo is actually pretty important to potential users of the material. Best practice is to just retain all of that stuff by copying and pasting such notices into your attribution.

## Examples of attribution

### Attributing unmodified works

Here is a photo. Following it are some examples of how people might attribute it.



[Creative Commons 10th Birthday Celebration San Francisco](#) by [tvol](#) is licensed under [CC BY 2.0](#).

This is a good attribution. Why?

Title given: “Creative Commons 10th Birthday Celebration San Francisco”

Author given and linked: “[tvol](#)”

Source linked: “Creative Commons 10th Birthday Celebration San Francisco”  
– linked to original Flickr page

License indicated and linked: “CC BY 2.0” – linked to license deed

[Photo](#) by tvol / [CC BY](#).

This is a pretty good attribution. Why?

Title given: Title is not noted (it should be) but at least the source is linked.

Author given: “tvol” but not linked to profile

Source linked: “Photo” – linked to original Flickr page

License indicated and linked: “CC BY” – linked to license deed

Photo: Creative Commons

This is an incorrect attribution. Why?

Title: Title is not noted.

Author: Creative Commons is not the author of this photo.

Source: No link to original photo.

License: There is no mention of the license, much less a link to the license.

“Creative Commons” is an organization.

[Attributing modified or derivative works](#)

Providing the terms of the license allow you to do so, you can modify or create derivatives of most open resources. Where possible, follow a good model of attribution. Where possible, you may want to indicate the type of derivative you created. It is also good practice to indicate your own license of a modified or derivative work (following the terms of the original license). Don't forget to note if you modified the work yourself (example).

## Attributing multiple sources

It can be challenging to attribute multiple sources, especially when combining them into a single derivative work. Where possible, indicate clearly which attribution belongs to which work. [See this site for more details.](#)

## Attribution in specific media

As stated above, best practices for attribution apply as reasonable to the medium you're working with. For media such as offline materials, video, audio, and images, consider:

1. Publishing a web page with attribution information. For example, on a webpage featuring your audio recording, provide a credit list of material you used that adheres to best practices above. Doing so allows not only your material, but the materials you attribute, to be found by search engines and other web discovery tools. If possible within the medium, make the Author, Source, and License links the user can follow.
2. Mentioning the credits within the media itself. For example, crediting videos can be a simple list of the materials used with their associated licenses in a



screen at the end of a video. For audio, it can be a verbal recitation of credits at the end of the recording.

Also, several groups are exploring ways to make attribution easier and simultaneously machine-readable for the web. Here are some tools that have been developed:

[Open Attribute](#) – a browser plugin for Firefox and Chrome that grabs the CC license metadata on a web page and turns it into an attribution for you

[Commons Machinery](#) – a suite of plugins for Firefox and open office tools that enables copying and pasting images with the attribution info already attached.

Attribution: Adapted from [Best Practices for Attribution](#) by [Creative Commons Wiki](#), licensed under a [CC BY 4.0 International License](#).

## Where do you place the attribution?

Like OERs in general, the rules and practices for attribution are quite flexible. There is no one right place to put an attribution statement. You just need to make sure your attribution is reasonable, is informative/helpful to your audience, and is suited to the medium with which you're working.

Ultimately, you should place an attribution where it makes the most sense. This can vary depending on what kind of material you're working with. For example, if you are creating a slide show, you might place your attributions at the bottom of each slide, or on a single slide at the end of the presentation. Both are acceptable!

## Tips & tricks

- Check whether the creator has provided specific instructions on how they would like to be attributed. These instructions are usually clearly indicated with the CC license information. One example of this is if they want you to include both the author's name and the institution's name. If they have given specific instructions, follow those. If they haven't, use the structure we have outlined in this module.
- Keep track of everything you use! Finding materials again can be difficult, so it's best to make a list as you work.
- Don't hesitate to contact the creator/original source to ask for permission or clarification. Remember, the CC license gives permissions up front, but it doesn't mean you can't ask for additional permissions.
- Attribution information might not be obvious. You might have to look around on the website to find the license, etc.
- Do your best with whatever information exists. There may not be a title or an author listed. Or you may not be able to find an author profile page. In this case, leave the author without a hyperlink.
- Use the [Open Attribution Builder](#) for help creating attributions.

## Other open licenses

While CC licensing is the type of open licensing you're most likely to encounter, it's important to remember that not every OER uses CC licensing.

Some repositories use their own licenses, and actually provide you with ready-made attributions when you download the resource. The following 3 minute video will show three image repositories, Unsplash, Pixabay, and Pexels that use their own licenses.

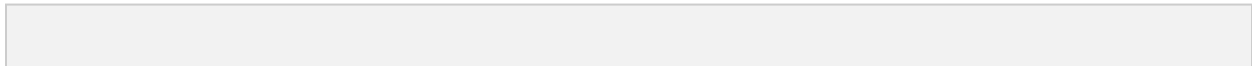
It is interesting to note that these three licenses do not require attribution. However, just like Public Domain resources, it is best practice to attribute anyway.

## [Other Open Licenses on YouTube](#)

### Attribution vs. citation

Attribution is a similar process to citing academic works in a paper, but there are some key differences. The following table outlines some of the ways in which citations and attribution are similar and different.

<b>Attribution</b>	Purpose is legal (e.g. following licensing regulations)	Typically includes licensing information for the work	Used to quote or paraphrase all or a portion of a work	Can change the work under Fair Use or with advance permission  (e.g., under most CC licenses)	Attribution statement styles are still emerging, but there are some defined best practices	Attribution statements are typically found near the work used  (e.g., below an image)
<b>Citation</b>	Purpose is academic (e.g. avoiding plagiarism)	Does NOT typically include licensing information for the work	Used to quote or paraphrase a limited portion of a work	Can paraphrase, but cannot typically change the work's meaning	Many citation styles are available (e.g., APA, Chicago, and MLA)	Cited resources are typically placed in a reference list



*[The 6 Variations of the CC Licences](#)” image by Markus Büsges is licensed under [CC BY-SA 4.0](#).*

*Attribution Statements is adapted from “[BCcampus Open Education Self-Publishing Guide Chapter 25](#) by [BCCampus](#) licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#); “[OER Tutorial](#)”, “[OER for Faculty](#)”, and “[OER Tutorial](#)” by [Algonquin College Library](#) licensed under [CC BY-NC](#); and “[Best practices for attribution](#)” by [Creative Commons Wiki](#) licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).*

*Attribution vs. Citation is adapted from [The OER Starter Kit Workbook](#) by Abbey K. Elder & Stacy Katz, licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).*

## *Important reminders*

- You can only apply Creative Commons to works for which you are the copyright holder. You can’t give permission for people to use intellectual property that isn’t yours!
- All creative commons licenses are irrevocable. This means that once you apply a CC license to a work, that license applies to the work until the copyright on the work expires. If you are reusing a work, this means that you can be confident that the creator won’t -and can’t!- arbitrarily pull back the rights granted under the CC license.
- You can always request additional permissions that are not offered in the open license by contacting the creator.
- You can ask a librarian for advice or assistance!