

Open Source and Creative Commons

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What is “Open Source”?

- Literal: You get the source can and look at it
 - This is **not** the common meaning, however!
 - Example: You can also get the source code to Windows (in special situations) or the Windows class libraries (MFC): But neither is “open source”!
- Commonly:
 - Source code is available in human-readable and understandable form
 - Not: Decompiled code, assembler code, ...
 - The software can be copied, distributed, and used freely
 - You can use it however you want and don't have to pay license fees
 - You can modify the software and distribute these modifications

“Free Software” vs. “Open Source”

- Both are quite similar
- Free as in “free speech, not free beer”
 - Not necessarily free: E.g. the big Linux distributions
 - You pay for packaging, CDs, printed books, services, guarantees, etc.!
- Different aspects are important
 - Open Source: You can look into the source code
 - Free Software: You can do (almost) whatever you want with it
- Biggest problem: There is no official definition!

Open Source Definition by the OSI (1)

- Free redistribution: Selling or giving away; alone or aggregated with other SW
 - No royalty or fee allowed
- Source code: Must be included; distribution as source or compiled allowed
 - Or well-known method for obtaining the source for no more than reasonable reproduction cost (preferably download via Internet)
 - No intermediate or obfuscated forms allowed
- Derived works: Modifications and derived works must be allowed
 - Includes distribution under the same license (=Copyleft!)
- No license needed: Rights must apply to all recipients of the program without the need for any written/... license (e.g. no NDA)

Open Source Definition by the OSI (2)

- Source code integrity: Possible restriction = No distribution of source code in modified form, only as patches (=diff)
 - Possible restriction: Derived works must have a different name or version number
- No discrimination: Every person or group may use it and for every purpose
 - Not: No use in business, for military use, by African people, Chinese nationals, ...
 - Note: Other laws may still prevent this; just the license is not allowed to do it
 - Example: Export restrictions to certain countries
- No packaging required: The rights must not be limited to a specific distribution
 - Extracting a part and adhering to the license → Distribute separately or in other distr.

Open Source Definition by the OSI (3)

- No aggregation restrictions: Distribution in any kind of way and together with any kind of software
 - Not: Only open source software may be on the CD; download distribution only; ...
 - Note: The GPL conforms to this
 - Applies to a “single work” only, i.e. libraries linked to a GPL software result in a single work; GPL + (unrelated) proprietary SW on a single CD is no problem!
- Technology neutrality: No requirement for any style of interface or technology
 - Example: Click-wrap-licenses → No distribution by FTP/CD-ROM/... possible
 - May not require a user interface when running
 - May also be used completely in the background

Other “licenses”

- Public Domain (\approx “Gemeinfrei”): Not an official definition, but commonly seen as a product without copyright restrictions
 - Copyright protection has elapsed (not for software) or was not reached (\rightarrow trivial)
 - Ownership “disclaimed”: You can do with it whatever you want; no restrictions at all
 - In AT and DE not completely possible – only in effect
 - In the USA this is a legal option
- Shareware: You can test the software for free, but it is still proprietary software
 - If you want to use it longer/permanently, then you have to pay for it!
- AdWare: You don’t have to pay for it in money, but in looking at advertisements
 - Typically proprietary and closed source!

“Copyleft” = ???

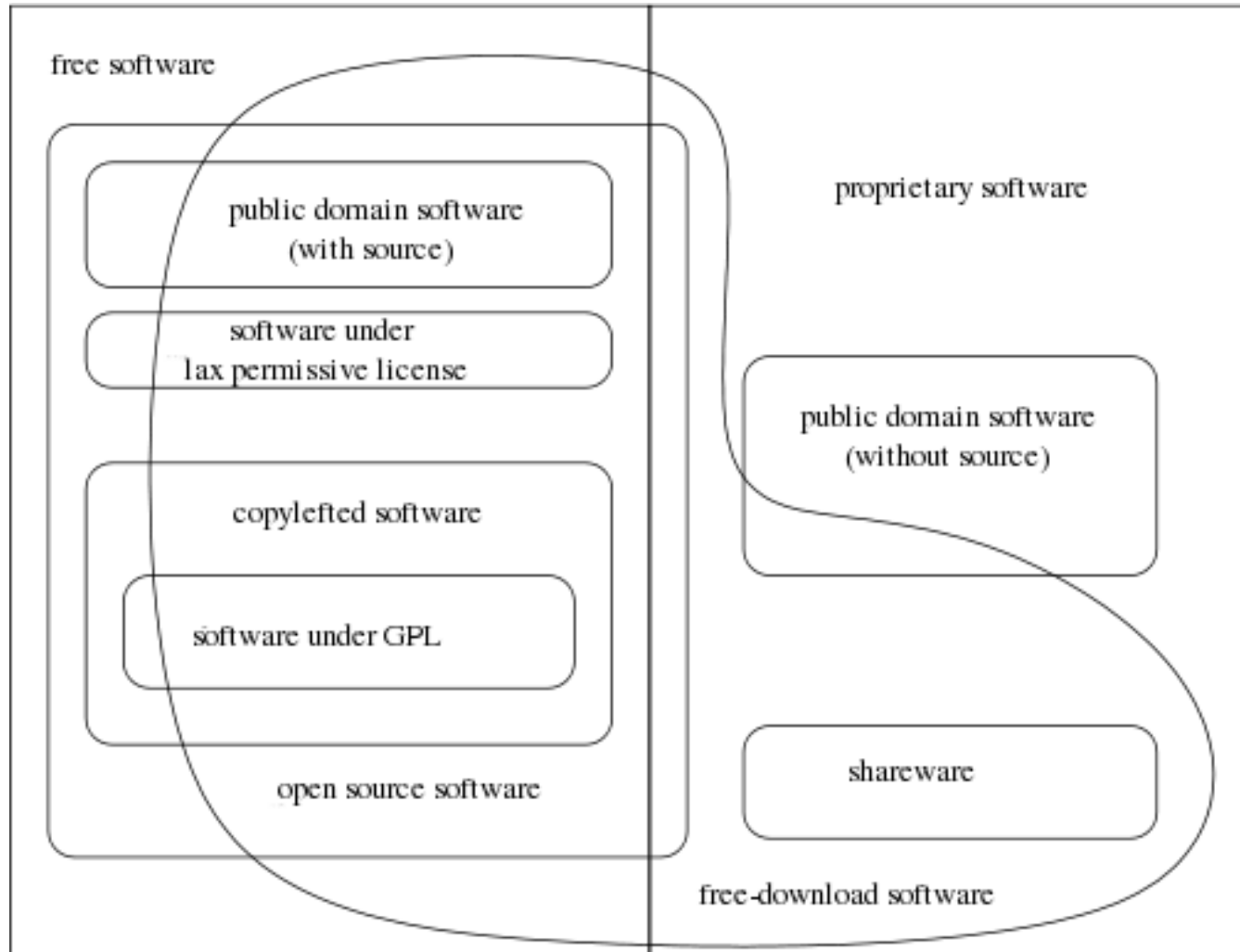
- Allusion to “Copyright”: **Right** to **copy** → Right to **copy** is **left** to user
- One solution to the “problem” of modifications
 - If the original was free, any modified work based on it is newly restricted
 - Copyleft shall ensure, that what is free once, will remain free forever (=“viral”!)
- “Strong” vs “weak” copyleft: GPL vx. LGPL
 - Strong: When using a copyleft song in a movie, the movie must be copyleft
 - Weak: Only when modifying the song, the song must be copyleft again, regardless of the movie it is used in
 - Various “middle” grounds exist: No definition separation
- You **may**: Copy, modify, distribute, but **must**: Use same license



Some important Open Source licenses

- GNU Public License (GPL)
 - Origin: Richard Stallman/Jerry Cohen for the GNU project
 - Most often used Open Source license!
- Library/Lesser GPL (LGPL)
 - Variant of GPL; a bit more free than the GPL
- BSD (original and new one)
 - Origin: Berkeley Software Distribution; from the University of California at Berkeley
 - Main source: BSD Unix variant (→ Mac OS X!)
- MIT
 - Origin: Massachusetts Institute of Technology (X Windows System)

Diagram of licenses



MIT license /X11 License

- Very simple and short
- Non-Copyleft: Can be used in proprietary software
 - But copyright notice and license must be included
- Disclaimer of warranty or liability
 - Complete; not possible in the EU/Austria to that degree
 - But: You get it for free, so liability can be reduced extremely
 - Not excludable in AT: Intentional harm, gross negligence
- “You can do with it whatever you want, but don’t blame us if it doesn’t work”

BSD license

- Very simple and short
- Non-Coypleft
- Requirements:
 - Redistribution of source code must include copyright notice, conditions and disclaimer
 - Binary redistribution must reproduce copyright notice, conditions and disclaimer in documentation and/or other materials provided with the distribution
 - Neither the name of the distributor nor the contributors may be used for endorsing or promoting derived products
- Disclaimer of warranty or liability; like in MIT license
- “You can do with it whatever you want, but don’t blame us if it doesn’t work”

BSD license – Old version

- Required attribution, i.e. that all advertising material and the software itself must display an acknowledgement
 - This made it incompatible to the GPL
- Problematic, as a much-changed SW would acquire a huge list of contributors!

GPL v2

- Most widely used Open Source / Copyleft license
 - But it is often misunderstood in its legal consequences!

- Four basic freedoms:
 - Any use is allowed, including commercial one
 - Copies may be distributed in any form, including for money and gratis
 - The source code may be inspected and modified in any way
 - Modified versions may be distributed in any form

GPL v2: What you don't have to do

- Publish/distribute any modified versions: You can keep them completely private!
 - Modify it and use this modification internally; no need to make it public
 - But: If a large company/subcompanies, you might have to publish it!
- Enter any contract, sign anything, send messages, etc.
 - No evidence of accepting it → You can always decline it
 - But then you don't have any rights → Basic copyright law forbids everything
- Give credit to the original creators or mention them anywhere
 - But see the license requirements later!
- Enforce the license
- Provide any warranty or support for the original or any modifications

GPL v2: Restrictions (1)

- You receive a lot of freedom, but you have to comply with several provisions:
 - When distributing, you must distribute the source code along side it
 - Or on request send it for mere self-costs (=cost of copying & sending; no profit!)
 - The recipient can the distribute for free, if he wants to!
 - Written offer valid for at least three years to **any** third party
 - This applies whether it's the original or a modified version
 - Offering access to freely copy the work (=webserver) → Putting the source in the same place is sufficient; need not be included in the download
 - You must include a copyright notice and a disclaimer of warranty in any distribution
 - Conspicuously and in appropriate form
 - Keep intact all references to the GPL

GPL v2: Restrictions (2)

- You cannot change the license for modifications, it must again be the GPL
 - But you can upgrade: From older to newer versions (i.e. GPLv2 → GPLv3)
 - No additional restrictions possible
 - No additional freedoms possible (e.g. making it BSD/MIT)
 - You can do this for your own contributions, but not the rest!
- You must include the GPL license itself in any distribution
- When you modify a file, you must put in a notice that you changed it and at what date
- Interactive programs must upon start show a copyright notice, a warranty disclaimer, that users may distribute the SW under the GPL, and how to view a copy of the GPL

Typical file header

- Note: This is not a binding formula, just a suggestion!

<one line to give the program's name and an idea of what it does.>
Copyright (C) *<yyyy> <name of author>*

This program is free software; you can redistribute it and/or modify it under the terms of the GNU General Public License as published by the Free Software Foundation; either version 2 of the License, or (at your option) any later version.

This program is distributed in the hope that it will be useful, but WITHOUT ANY WARRANTY; without even the implied warranty of MERCHANTABILITY or FITNESS FOR A PARTICULAR PURPOSE. See the GNU General Public License for more details.

You should have received a copy of the GNU General Public License along with this program; if not, see [<http://www.gnu.org/licenses/>](http://www.gnu.org/licenses/).

Typical interactive program start/About box

- Note: This is not a binding formula, just a suggestion!

<one line to give the program's name and version.>, Copyright (C) *<year>* *<name of author>*
<Program name> comes with ABSOLUTELY NO WARRANTY; for details
type `show w'. This is free software, and you are welcome
to redistribute it under certain conditions; type `show c'
for details.

- “show w” and “show c” are just examples, they could also be “-h”, “--help”, a menu entry, web links , etc.!
- Additionally very common (but not required by the license!):
 - Installation program shows the whole GPL at the beginning
 - You must change a radio button from “I decline” to “I accept” to continue installing

“Work based on the program” (WBOP)

- Problem: When is a modification/combination/... a WBOP (→ must be GPL)?
 - Derived works: No problem, always included
 - Statically linked: Always
 - Dynamically linked (or shared address space): ??? FSF says yes, but not clear
 - Header/API is “integrated” into the program using it
 - Proprietary Linux graphics drivers?
 - **Note: Dynamic linking by end-user is usually seen as not being a problem!**
 - Webservices, socket/pipe/command line communication: Clearly not a WBOP
 - If clearly separate and not “intimately coupled”, i.e. generally useful
- Mere aggregation is **never** a WBOP
 - Several programs on one distribution medium; CD-ROM, webserver directory, ...

GPLv2: “Source code”

- The preferred form of the work for making modifications
- Must be complete:
 - All modules: The “main” source code
 - All interface definitions: Header files, IDLs, ...
 - All compilation scripts: Make files, project definitions etc.
 - All installation scripts
- Excluding anything normally distributed with the operating system or the development tools (→ compiler, assembler, linker, ...)

“Dangers” of the GPL

- If not complying fully with GPL, all rights received are automatically terminated
 - In the USA this is disastrous: No curing is possible at all except through obtaining the explicit consent of all authors → You can stop distributing your modified version ...
 - Continental law: You can always re-accept the license, but this works only from then on and only when complying fully
 - You still did distribute/copy/use/... illegally before!
 - Anyone who got the program from you and complies with the GPL is unaffected
 - Explicit provision; typically the complete “subtree” would suddenly become illegal!
- If you cannot fully comply with the GPL (laws, court decisions, ...) You cannot use the software: All or nothing

GPL v3

- Aims:
 - Make it better compatible with international variations in copyright law
 - Take better care of software patents
 - Prevent “Tivoization”
 - You get source, can modify and compile it, but you cannot install it on the hardware, as it must be signed with a private key which is **not** distributed
 - This still complies with the GPLv2!
 - Public key is in the hardware
- Use: Still very limited. E.g. Linux will probably be never “upgraded”
 - Some companies changed their licenses from “GPLv2 or later” to “GPLv2 only”

LGPL

- Quite similar to the GPL, but with reduced Copyleft
 - Available as 2.1 or 3; similar to the matching GPL
- Main difference: Copyleft
 - When putting a library under GPL, every program using it must be under GPL
 - With LGPL, the software using it can be anything, including proprietary
- BUT: If you change the **library** → all these changes must be again under **LGPL!**
 - Viral only regarding itself and its modification, not “other” software
- Requires a clear delineation, what is “the library” and what is “something else”
 - In practice rather little problem: Come (related) classes/modules/units/...
- Often used in proprietary software

LGPL

- Basic idea: Better than no use of the software, make a concession to the developers of proprietary one
 - But if they find bugs or improve the library, they must share this with the public
 - Note: They typically distribute the result, so they really must “share”!
- Additional requirements:
 - LGPL itself must be added to the distribution
 - Copyright notice and warranty disclaimer
 - Changed files must carry notice of this fact and the date of change
- Optional: Library may be put under GPL
 - Irreversible from that point on for this derivation!

LGPL: How to do it

- Link everything together and put the source code of the library alongside
 - Possible, but undesirable: You must enable the user to re-link your work together with a modified version of the library, i.e. make the source/object code available!
- Use dynamic linking: Preferable!
 - Users can replace the library, which will then be used by your software
- When a function or table of data is provided by the application (other than as an argument), your software must work as far as possible when this data is absent
 - Prevent library from being completely dependent on some other (closed) source!
 - Example: A table used for fast calculation of square roots
 - If it is absent, the library must still calculate square roots, albeit perhaps slower

Enforcing Open Source licenses

- Enforcing in court is possible and has occurred in Germany and USA
 - It is a valid license/contract
 - But there are, at least in Germany, convoluted legal arguments necessary!
- Basic idea: The infringer has complete freedom to select
 - No communication → No evidence for author!
 - “I accepted the GPL”: The he is in breach of a license/contract
 - “I did not accept the GPL”: Then he has no rights based on the GPL and must adhere to the “normal” copyright law → This grants him (almost) no rights at all
 - Result: Whatever he selects, he is in trouble!
 - Typical way out to try: Accept the GPL, but argue that its restrictions are illegal
 - This did not work in any of the cases!

Potential legal problems (1)

- Price regulation: The GPL demands that your license fee is exactly € 0,-
 - Price fixing is typically a problem, but here it seems not to be (favours consumers!)
- Loss of transactability (Verkehrsfähigkeit) on violations
 - If someone high in the chain violates the GPL, all customers would suddenly and without doing anything be illegal → This would not be acceptable, as you cannot start actions against your distributor
 - This has been solved in the GPL: Anyone in compliance receives their rights directly from the author, not from their distributor!
- General terms of contracts (AGBs)
 - Language: In computer science English is quite customary; but for general public this can be a problem. Also regarding length and complexity (GPLv2 is long & complex!).

Potential legal problems (2)





- Exclusion of liability (applies to MIT, BSD, ... as well!)
 - Complete exclusion is legally impossible in Austria (Germany, ...)
 - At least with regard to consumers, a reduced interpretation is not possible
 - Therefore the complete clause is voided!
 - Result: Legal liability applies
 - As you receive it for free (legally seen a “present”):
 - Liability is reduced to intentional harm and gross negligence
 - Guarantees (Gewährleistung) for
 - Defects maliciously kept secret
 - Knowingly distributing it in violation of copyright of third parties
- Patents: See GPLv3 for this!

Creative Commons (CC)

- Open source licenses are nice, but they are problematic if its not software!
 - There exists also a GPL documentation license, but its not in wide use
- Creative Commons is intended for various other kinds of creative work
 - Texts, images, films, music, ...: Everything which is “copyright”
 - Therefore it also includes e.g. “public performance” (→ software ???)
 - But its unsuitable for computer programs!
- CC is not a single license, but rather a set of them
 - Website includes a “generator”: A form to select what you want, and the correct license is then selected and shown

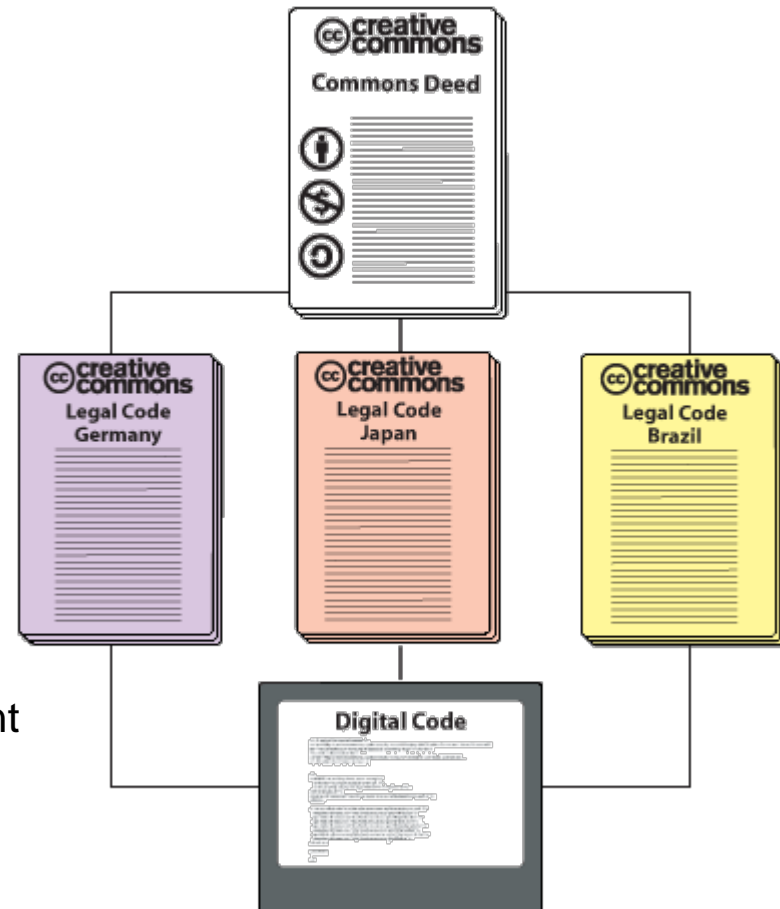
Creative Commons (CC)

- Basic idea: Very open + a selection of freely combinable restrictions:

-  — Attribution (“by”): Give the original author credit
 - Note: This is part of any version, i.e. no CC license is without attribution!
-  — No commercial use (“nc”): Only non-commercial use
-  — No derivative work (“nd”): Copy and use it freely, but don’t modify it
-  — Share alike (“sa”): “Copyleft”, i.e. all modifications must again be CC-sa
 - Cannot be combined with “nd”, obviously!

CC: How it is described

- Three forms exist
 - Human-readable (☺): In normal language
 - States what you can/cannot do
 - Not legally binding
 - Lawyer-readable: The full legal version
 - International and localized versions exist
 - 53 translations + 10 in progress
 - Takes national legal specifics into account
 - Machine-readable: Metadata
 - E.g. for search engines or repositories



Limitations of CC

- Work must be under copyright
 - Not suitable for trade marks, patents, design protection etc.
- License is non-revocable: If its under CC, then it stays there
 - If you make a modification, you can license this in any way
 - But the “original” will remain under CC
- Royalties can only be collected if under “nc”
 - Statutory or compulsory licenses
 - Collecting societies (AKM, Literar-Mechana, ...) can be a problem!
 - These may own the rights, so you cannot put it under CC anymore
 - At least you can't collect money for those works

Austria: AKM and others (they include all future works!) → No CC possible anymore!

Different kinds of CC

- Attribution: Cite the original creator
 - Part of every CC license → Always necessary!
- Non-Commercial:
 - This does not allow “own costs” or anything like this → €0,- !
 - This does not include the author!
 - You can still sell a license to someone (e.g. without “by” or “sa”)
 - CC-by-nc-sa → Everybody can listen to the music freely (and gratis!)
 - Sell it to a company to use in advertisements
 - Royalties for statutory uses or to collecting societies are still required for users!

Different kinds of CC

- No-derivative: The work may be used only in its original form
 - No modifications are allowed, except those required to exercise the rights granted
 - Insofar technically necessary for other media and formats
 - This would not be “modified work” in copyright anyway!
 - Note: At least in Austria modifications are always permitted, but they may not be published/performed/... in any way without permission of the original author!
- Share-alike: You must use a compatible license
 - The same license, a later version of it with the same license elements, a nationalized form of this license (this or later), or a compatible one (list on CC website)
 - List of further elements (add license, refrain from restrictions, keep notices intact, ...)

Requirements

- You must include the license or an URL to it in every copy or public performance
- No additional restrictions are allowed
 - This includes any technological measures to restrict the users exercising their rights!
- No sublicensing (→ Everyone gets it directly from the author)
- All notices referring to license or disclaimer must be kept intact
- For adaptations: Original author may request that all credits to her be removed
- No distortion, mutilation, modification or other derogatory action which would be prejudicial to the original author's honor or reputation
 - But this must be waived to the maximum extent possible under law!
 - You can then **only** request that the attribution to you is removed!

Legal aspects of CC (1)

- Includes again a warranty disclaimer
 - If the purported author is not the real author (→ couldn't legally put it under CC!), you still infringe copyright!
 - Validity: See GPL above!
- Only CC-sa is “copyleft”, all others allow use in proprietary or differently licensed works
 - Only this element will remain under CC
- Applies also to any new uses discovered in the future
 - This could be a problem
 - DE: 1966-2007: No transfer of rights for then unknown uses; now very complex
 - AT: Has always been possible

Legal aspects of CC (2)

- Automatic termination upon breach
 - See GPL → You are then back to the basic copyright
 - People further down are not affected as long as they are in full compliance
- There is no requirement to distribute at all
 - Neither for the author nor any recipients
 - E.g. film: Is just shown in cinemas, but not given away/sold on DVDs, ...
 - No requirement to distribute, but anyone can film the screen (→ CC!)

Proper attribution

- Leave any copyright notices intact
 - Reproduce them in a way suitable to the medium (e.g. texts → end of film)
- Cite the author's name/screen name/alias/...
 - Nice (=not mandatory): Provide a link to homepage if published online
- Cite the works title or name
 - Nice (=not mandatory): Provide a link to original if published online
- Cite the specific CC license
 - Nice (=not mandatory): Provide a link to full license text (own page or CC homepage)
- Derivative works must be marked as such (“translation of ...”, “based on ...”, ...)
 - What changes (files, paragraphs, ...) need not be described or marked in any way
- Copyright holder **may** require: Specific name/pseudonym/organisation and URL

Conclusions

- GPL and Creative Commons: Both are quite permissive
 - But there are some important restrictions which you must follow
 - If not, the consequences can be very severe!
- Software: GPL (use v2 or v3) or LGPL (if less copyleft is desired)
- Other kind of art: Creative Commons
- Trademarks, patents, utility patents, design protection: Nothing similar exists
 - Full licensing necessary
 - Similar licenses **can** be drafted!
- Take care of “interoperability” (copyleft can be very restrictive) and permanence

Thank you for your attention!

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Links

- GPLv2: <http://www.gnu.de/documents/gpl-2.0.de.html>
 - GPLv3: <http://www.gnu.org/licenses/gpl.html>
- LGPLv2.1: <http://www.gnu.de/documents/lgpl-2.1.de.html>
 - LGPLv3: <http://www.gnu.de/documents/lgpl-3.0.de.html>
- Creative Commons Austria: <http://www.creativecommons.at/>
 - CC Lizenzgenerator: <http://creativecommons.org/choose/?lang=de>