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# OER Copyright and Licensing

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An OER is comprised of many components. When using an OER, or creating your own, you will need to be mindful of copyright and licensing restrictions, so you know what objects you can and cannot include in your OER.

## Canadian Copyright Act

Under the Canadian Copyright Act, the creator of any work is provided the sole right to produce or reproduce that work. The copyright term is limited to the life of the creator plus fifty years after his/her death. Once this term has ended, the work enters the public domain. [Canadian Copyright Act](#)

Many materials are copyrighted this way. In fact, the majority of the materials from your institutional or local library are not suitable for OERs due to the terms of use and licensing agreements.

## Creative Commons Licensing

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Typically, OERs are licensed under an open licensing system, the most popular being the [Creative Commons \(CC\)](#) licensing system. The Creative Commons is an “open” license that allows others to reuse, adapt, and re-publish content. CC allows creators to explain, in plain language, how their works can be used by the broader community.

## The Four Components of Creative Commons Licenses

[Image Source](#)



*Attribution (BY)*

Proper attribution must be given to the original creator of the work



*Noncommercial (NC)*

The work cannot be used for commercial means such as for-profit advertising



*No Derivative Works (ND)*

The work cannot be altered or “remixed.” Only identical copies of the work can be redistributed without additional permission from the creator.



*Share Alike (SA)*

Iterations of the original work must be made available under the same license terms.

*Example Generated License:*



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