Ethical Use of Information: Images, Media, and Copyright



Copyright is about the permission to use someone else's work. Copyright law protects authors from the time a work is in "fixed form" (for example, written down, or drawn on paper).

Most works are protected by copyright

Almost all creative and intellectual work is protected by copyright; however, facts are not subject to copyright.

Copyright is automatic

Works do not have to have copyright notice posted or be registered in any way in order to be protected by copyright. This means that everything from a novel to a napkin doodle has full and automatic copyright protections.

Copyright lasts a long time

The law is very detailed, but copyright protection usual is in place for the lifespan of the author plus 70 years. After copyright expires, works become part of the public domain, meaning no one has copyright any longer.



As a student, there are some things you can do with copyright-protected materials if you are using them for educational purposes because of the "Fair Use" doctrine of copyright law.

However, you are not always protected from copyright infringement if you use certain images and media. As a general practice, you should always check if the content you are using is licensed for free and open use. This includes songs, videos, images, icons, vectors, and more. You can often find many collections of copyright-free music, images, and more online.

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