

Copyright and your study and research

You might need to access or make copies of copyright-protected works for your own private study or research. There are ways you can do this legally, within certain limits.



Public domain

Copyright lasts for a limited time, normally 70 years after the creator dies. The typographical layout of works is protected for 25 years from publication.

If copyright has expired, the work is in the public domain and you can freely reuse it.



Library licensed resources

The Library pays licence fees for online resources such as ebooks and ejournals. You can download and print from these for your own personal use subject to download limits automatically set by the publisher. You should respect these limits and not try to bypass them.

There are also 'exceptions' in copyright law which permit limited copying in certain contexts.



Section 29: Research and private study

Permits you to make a copy for your own personal use for non-commercial research or study.

If you make a copy, it must be fair to the copyright holder.

There's no strict legal definition of what is fair but copying no more than about one chapter from a book, or a single article from a journal issue, is a good general guideline.



Section 31A-F: Accessible copies

Permits a disabled person, or another person acting on their behalf, to make a copy in an accessible format. This can include accessible copies of material from the Library.

If you require copies of material in alternative formats, contact the Library Disability Team: librarydisability@abdn.ac.uk.



Section 29A: Text and data mining

Permits you to copy material for text and data mining (TDM) for non-commercial research so long as you have lawful access to the original work.

If your use of the material falls outside this exception, you will need to contact the copyright holder for permission before you use their material.

Need advice? Visit our [website](#) or email library@abdn.ac.uk.



This work is licensed under a [CC-BY-NC-SA 4.0](#) licence.
Last updated September 2022.