

## Resource: Image Use and Attribution Online

*The following is a basic overview of copyright and current preferred practices regarding online attribution, not a full legal guideline.*

**Using Images on Your Site and Social Media:** Websites and social media posts with images get significantly higher engagement rates online. To attract views and spread your message, you will need to learn how to find and credit images.

**What Is Copyright?** Image copyright = legal ownership of an image. Copyright exists even if the creator never registers their work with a copyright office. If you created an original image, or photograph, you own the copyright. That ownership gives you exclusive rights to display and reproduce what you create. If you didn't create it, you need permission to use it.

**Fair use** allows work protected by copyright to be used without specific permission (but with attribution) in instances deemed "beneficial to society." The main question used to determine fair use is "whether such use is of a commercial nature or is for nonprofit educational purposes." Nonprofit uses are regularly considered fair use.

**Best Practices for Attribution:** In short, always credit the creator and give the source information. Include the photographer's name, the name of the image (if applicable), the source of the image, and a link to the source or photographer's website/online portfolio. The picture credit should be directly under the image on a website, or at the end of the body of the post on social media. Because each case is different (attributing art, quotes, lyrics, etc.), you can decide what form of attribution is most suitable for your specific situation - just give credit where credit is due.

**Learn More About Copyright and Attribution:** [Creative Commons](#)

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