



Grabbing Copyright-Friendly Images

Getting Media from Web Sites

There are a number of helpful copyright-friendly image sites, and choosing a system early that allows you to grab and properly cite good images, songs, etc. will save you plenty of time later. Knowing how (and being willing) to follow rules related to copyright isn't hard, and the approach below focuses on making sure one avoids simple pitfalls, such as going back to a site to try to find info one failed to grab the first time. To start, open the following site in a new tab or window.

<http://search.creativecommons.org>

There are a series of tabs (Google, Yahoo, etc.) - click on the one that says "Flickr". Flickr (<http://flickr.com>) is a photo sharing site with literally billions (two, at last count) photos that have been uploaded by people around the world. They 'tag' the photos with descriptive words (beach, Hawaii, halfpipe), but in the process of uploading the file, they'll also tag what kind (if any) copyright might apply to the photo. Without going into great detail here, what we want are photos that the people who contributed say are okay for us to use. I have heard there are about one hundred million in that category on Flickr, so it won't normally present much of a limitation. The term "creative commons" refers to the copyright-friendly licensing system which Flickr uses, and is a system you should learn more about if you aren't already familiar with it (<http://creativecommons.org>).

On the search.creativecommons.org page, put in a search term in the field in the green area at the top of the page, and it will give you a frame with a set of results. Open one you like in a new tab or window using your right-click. You can do a normal click, but depending on your browser and/or operating system, it might not let you go 'back' to the search results. I put in a search for Hawaii and because I'm interested in Japan personally, I chose a picture of a sumo wrestler, getting this page when I opened it up in a new tab:

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/hellochris/540297163/>

Very big dude.

My goal now is to get this picture in a way that will allow me to cite it, hassle-free. Here are my steps (with comments):

1. I highlight and copy the title of the picture, which in this case is "Sumo in Hawaii". (I'll paste this when I save the file later.)
2. I click on "all sizes" just above and to the left of the picture. (Small pictures are bad for videos - the bigger the image, the better it looks, and the more you can do with it, particularly if you decide to use only one part of the picture.)
3. Now I have a much larger image. This is what I'll save to my folder which will hold the media I want to use in my project. I do this by doing a right-click (CTRL-click on a Mac) on the picture and choosing "save image as". (It could be "save link as" or "save target as" or something similar your computer calls it.)

(more on p. 2)

4. I now paste the picture name I copied before. When you paste the name, you might need to take out punctuation that your computer doesn't like in a file name (the "&" sign, for example). Don't save yet! Next, I add "by hellochris from Flickr". (I got the "hellochris" part from looking at the name toward the middle at the top - you may need to move the 'save' window down to make that work for you. Also, if you scrolled down first, you might need to cancel, scroll the window back up to see the name, and then do the save-as again.)
5. Ideally, after finding several good images (all which were filtered to those which are not fully copyrighted), you'll have saved them to a project folder, and each file name will contain the name of the image, the person who took/uploaded the pictures, and the name of the site (in this case, "Flickr"). This would allow someone to find the image again easily, which is one reason we do citations.

It's a few extra steps than just saving something with a bunch of letters and numbers, but a gobbledy-gook filename won't do anything to help me know which picture it is when I want to know later. Even better, I now have the info I want for when I add credits at the end of the video I make.

You may also choose to find good audio for your project, and you can use the same naming convention to make that easy with these files. Two sites that offer a lot of copyright-friendly (creative commons-licensed) music are:

<http://podsafeaudio.com>

<http://jamendo.com>

Note that both sites above could contain music that is not appropriate for younger audiences. If you want sound effects, there is a good site with free files at:

<http://www.partnersinrhyme.com/pir/PIRsfx.shtml>

Note that the site sells royalty-free sound effects, and offers free (public domain) files, too. The term, "royalty-free," does not mean you are free to use it, but rather that if you buy it you wouldn't need to provide a citation. Don't be confused by the difference - a lot of teachers like FreePlayMusic.com, but by their rules, teachers are not allowed to use what's there without paying. Why they chose the name they did is a bit mysterious, but this is certainly reflective of the confusion that is out there.

Another option being totally legal with both images and audio, of course, is to take/make one's own!

All video content on NextVista.org is supposed to contain only copyright-friendly or public domain content, and the goal is for teachers and students to have a place to submit good videos that help teach challenging academic concepts, introduce different parts of the world, or convey the joy and meaning that comes from serving others. Please feel free to contact us at info@nextvista.org if you are interested in projects for your classes. Below is a link with rules and submission instructions:

http://nextvista.org/resources/NV_Contributing_Material.pdf

These guidelines should simplify getting and using copyright-friendly content for educational projects. Like a lot of life, if you do it right the first time, things are easier later.