# Can I copy printed music without seeking permission?

**As with any copyright protected work, you should not make a copy(s) without having carefully considered Fair Dealing, the UK copyright exceptions and other best practice outlined below.**

If the copyright for a piece of work has expired (for written and artistic works, usually the creator’s lifetime + 70 years after their death), then it can be copied without having to seek permission.

There are copyright exceptions within the UK legislation which allow printed music to copied under specific circumstances without permission. These included the following copyright exceptions for research and private study, criticism, reviewing and quotation, parody, caricature and pastiche, along with education/teaching. The exceptions are aligned to the UK legal framework [Fair Dealing](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/exceptions-to-copyright#fair-dealing), so only the amount of work required to fulfil the purpose should be used. In addition, there is an exception which allows an accessible copy to be produced (providing it isn’t already available commercially), for brail or large print editions.

Aside from the UK copyright exceptions, a useful resource may be the Code of Fair Practice, developed by the Music Publishers Association for its members. Providing the use doesn’t circumvent a licence, the Code of Fair Practice provides scenarios when it may be appropriate to copy printed music within the confines of the law, subject to providing acknowledgement.

The Code of Fair Practice can be found at: <http://www.mpaonline.org.uk/sites/default/files/The_Code_of_Fair_Practice_Revised_Apr_2016.pdf>

# Useful Links

* Further detailed guidance for printed sheet music, can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/copyright-notice-printed-music>
* Non legal copyright guidance for the UK copyright exceptions and other policy can be found at: <https://www.gla.ac.uk/myglasgow/library/copyright/guidance/>
* Useful guidance produced by IAML (UK and Irl) around printed music: <https://iaml-uk-irl.org/copyright/> & FAQ: <https://iaml-uk-irl.org/copyright/uk-copyright-faqs/>