
Music, Film, TV and the Internet

A guide for parents and teachers

Music, film and TV on the internet – what you should know

There are many great ways of accessing music, film, TV and video safely and legally online.

This guide aims to keep parents, teachers and young people well-informed on how to stay safe and legal when enjoying entertainment on the internet or via a mobile device.

Did you know?

Using illegal sites and file-sharing programmes can be risky

Using illegal file-sharing programmes exposes users to the risk of unwelcome content such as viruses, pornography and violent images. File-sharing software can also compromise your privacy and security by opening up your computer and sharing what's stored on it with the outside world.

You could be breaking the law and face consequences

Copyright law applies to downloading, sharing and streaming just as in the world of physical CDs and DVDs. If you make music, film or TV content available to others on a file-sharing network, download from an illegal site, or sell copies without the permission of those who own the copyright, then you are breaking the law and could face serious penalties.

Using legal sites rewards creators for their work

Copyright laws protect those who work in the creative industries, allowing them to be rewarded fairly and to continue to create the music, film and TV programmes we all enjoy so much.

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Staying tuned in while staying legal

Where are the best legal sites to find music, film and TV?

There is a wide choice of legal sites where you can download or “stream” (transmit over the internet) music, film or TV content. Some are stores where you buy downloaded tracks, albums, TV shows, videos or films to play on a computer, a portable device or on a music player. Others charge a monthly subscription fee and let you stream from an internet-connected device at any time. Some services provide entertainment for free, supported by advertising.

If you’re looking for music, there are more than 60 services now available in the UK offering millions of tracks at great prices. Look out for the Music Matters trust mark which indicates that a site is legal and you are buying legitimate music there. A full list of these services can be found at www.whymusicmatters.org. Another useful site is www.pro-music.org which provides links to hundreds of legal music sites worldwide.

If you’re looking for film, www.findanyfilm.com is a great place to start. You can search for many of your favourite films, selecting the format you’d like to watch them in, from DVDs and Blu-rays to internet services. There’s also a comprehensive list of links to legal film and TV services at www.industrytrust.co.uk.

Is it OK to copy or rip music, film, TV programmes or videos from a CD or DVD to my computer or media player?

For music, making a digital copy of a CD you own for your personal use can generally be done without legal consequences even though technically it requires permission from the rights owners. However, distributing a digital copy on the internet or to a friend is different, and may result in legal action. For music purchased online, legal music download services generally allow you to make a copy as a backup for your own use on other devices.

For film it is a bit more complicated. To ensure those involved in making the film (from the actors and directors to the sound engineers, costume designers and investors) can be properly paid there is extra protection on DVDs which makes it difficult for people to copy or rip films. The film and TV industry does recognise that people may want to save films they have bought to different devices and is working to try and make this possible. An increasing number of DVDs and Blu-ray discs now carry a digital copy for you to watch on a portable device.

Is it legal to make a copy of streamed music or film?

Usually, it isn’t. Legal streaming services like Spotify and YouTube give instant access to tracks, films and videos, often for free, but they do not usually allow you to “rip” the content to make a permanent copy.



What you can and can't do with music, film and TV online

Is it always illegal to use file-sharing websites and services?

It is illegal to upload or download copyrighted files without permission from the person who owns the rights.

File sharing services can in theory be used legally, but in practice nearly all the content on them is illegal. If they are sites that aren't clearly licensed by copyright owners, then the only safe way to use them legally is to be sure you are sharing materials that are not protected by someone else's copyright – such as music or films you create yourself.

How are people who illegally file-share found out?

Generally, those file-sharing illegally do so on public networks. Every device connecting to the internet is assigned (usually by their internet service provider) a unique number known as an IP address. Details of this unique number as well as data showing the material used illegally are either clearly visible on or can be easily obtained from such services.

Music, video, TV and film companies can get a court order that requires ISPs to disclose customer details that identify infringers. The copyright owner can then take legal action against the infringers.

Does paying for my music or film guarantee that it is legal?

There are websites based overseas that sell tracks, TV shows and videos very cheaply because they are doing so illegally without paying the owners of the rights. To help you stick with legal websites, visit www.pro-music.org for links to legal music sites and www.industrytrust.co.uk for links to legal film and TV sites. Look for recognisable brands or, specifically for music, look for any site that displays the Music Matters trust mark.

Is it legal to download entertainment from blogs?

In some cases, entertainment is made available legally from blogs. However, links from blogs to music, film, TV or video stored on online storage services – called 'cyberlockers' – are generally not legal. In almost all cases, it won't be legal to download a song, album, film or TV programme offered for download via a link to a cyberlocker.

It is illegal to upload or download copyrighted files without permission from the person who owns the rights.



Find legal music and film sites at www.pro-music.org and www.findanyfilm.com

Staying safe and responsible

Are there penalties for illegally sharing films, music and other entertainment on the internet?

Yes, there are potentially very serious penalties for those illegally sharing film, music, TV and video. This is covered by civil law in the UK and may also in some circumstances be a crime. People who do it could face legal action resulting in damages and payment of costs.

Is the law changing on downloading and file-sharing?

Yes, in addition to existing penalties, a new law has been passed by Parliament to protect copyright on the internet. From 2011, internet subscribers whose accounts have been identified as being used for unlicensed file-sharing will be sent a series of notifications by their internet service provider. These will advise that their IP address has been used for unauthorised activity. If illegal use continues, legal action may follow.

Apart from copyright, what are the other risks involved in the illegal downloading of film, music, TV and video?

Illegal file-sharing programmes and websites pose greater risks to your computer or mobile phone than legitimate sites. Alongside media files, users often unwittingly download viruses and spyware. They can also inadvertently share personal computer files, containing financial information, with other users, potentially putting themselves at risk from identity theft. Also, some files are purposefully misnamed on file-sharing and peer-to-peer networks to trick people into downloading them.

Filtering tools that can block offensive content on websites are not effective when these illegal services are used leaving children at risk of exposure to unsuitable or harmful content.

Some peer-to-peer software lets users “chat” with other file-sharers, most of them strangers. For guidance about chatting on the internet see Childnet’s www.chatdanger.com website.

Where can I get more information about the security risks of illegal file-sharing?

Your ISP can give advice about the effects of using illegal file-sharing programmes. There have been many examples of computers becoming infected with viruses, malware and spyware after people have used P2P networks for music file-sharing. Many ISPs provide software that can protect people against these risks.

‘Sorted’ is Childnet’s guide to information security online for teens – www.childnet.com/sorted.

How can I prevent my internet connection being used for illegal file-sharing?

There are some basic steps you should take. Your ISP should provide information on how to protect your WiFi connection, including details on how a password can be set up to limit access to your connection.

Parental controls on software systems can also be activated to block access to specific websites. It’s also a good idea to make simple rules for whoever is using your computer and your network, so they don’t upload or download illegally.

Tips for parents and teachers

Parents

Talk with children about computer use

Are you aware of how your children are using the computer to access music, film and TV content? Talk to them so that they understand why it's important to use legal sites online.

Using legal sites helps to ensure that everyone who works to make a song, film or TV programme is paid fairly for their work. It's also worth discussing with them what the consequences would be for the whole family if they were caught breaking the law.

Explore the web's legal music, film and TV services

There are more than 13 million tracks licensed to legal music services. A full list of services worldwide is available at www.pro-music.org and www.whymusicmatters.org lists the services available in the UK. You may want to use a service such as iTunes or Amazon MP3, or one like Spotify which can supply music to the whole household.

For film and TV, there are many services now available to stream or download films or TV programmes online. These provide access to thousands of titles, and the amount of programming available is growing all the time.

To search for specific film titles online visit www.findanyfilm.com. You can also find a list of links to all legal film and TV sites at www.industrytrust.co.uk.

Check your computer and wireless connection

Are you aware of what is on the family computer? Make sure it is protected against viruses and spyware. Ensure your wireless connection is secure with a password and encryption (such as WPA). Talk to your family about what they do online, and decide what protections are best placed to meet the needs of the users in your house.

Teachers

Debate with your students

How do they access music, film and TV and what does it mean to them? How do people who create music or films get paid? What part does copyright play in the creation of entertainment and in the different jobs in the creative industries? What do they think of all the legal online services on offer? Check out resources on copyright at www.childnet.com/kia/toolkit/. For resources to be used when teaching specifically about film visit www.filmeducation.org

A topical subject for the curriculum

The ethics of accessing entertainment online is an excellent topic for discussion in a variety of lessons, such as Citizenship, ICT and Music and Film Studies.

Teaching about music, film and TV in the classroom

If you want to make sure that you are using music, film and TV programmes legally in school then check an online resource such as www.licensing-copyright.org. Many uses of copyrighted music, film and TV in the classroom for teaching are allowed by exceptions in the law for educational institutions.

Jargon buster

Blogs

Short for 'web log', a diary or journal published on the internet. Blogs are often used to post links to files, which may be illegal copies of music, films or other entertainment.

Cyberlocker

A service for storing large quantities of files on the internet. Frequently used for sharing music, film and TV illegally.

Downloading

Copying or transferring files (music tracks, films and TV programmes) from another computer or the internet to your own computer.

File-sharing

Allowing others, whom you may not know, to access information on your computer via the internet, including music, film and personal files.

Filtering

A way of restricting access to certain content, websites or functions online.

IP address

Short for internet protocol, a number – similar to a telephone number – that can be used to identify the account holder of a computer at a particular point in time when it is connected to the internet.

ISP

An internet service provider. A company that supplies a connection, enabling access to the internet.

Peer-to-peer (P2P)

A popular method of exchanging music, film or TV files directly from one or more computers to another without it passing through a central point.

Ripping

Making a digital copy of music or a film or video from a CD / DVD to a file, typically so it can be transferred to and played on a computer or portable media player like an iPod.

Router

A device used to connect computers to the internet.

Spyware

A malicious program installed on a computer without the user's knowledge, typically used to report information about the user and his or her activities online.

SSID

Short for service set identifier, a name or phrase that identifies an individual wireless router.

Streaming

Transmitting music, film or TV over the internet in real time so it can be played on a computer or media player but is not stored on the device.

Uploading

Making available files stored on your computer or device to other computers via the internet, or storage services such as cyberlockers.

Virus

A malicious program that can 'infect' computers, replicate itself and disrupt normal functioning.

WiFi

A way of transmitting computer data through the air, without wires, using radio waves.

WPA

Short for WiFi protected access, a security setting for wireless computers and devices.

About this guide and how to get further help

This guide has been written by children's charity Childnet International, with support from organisations representing creators and producers in the music, film, television and video industries.

To order free copies of this leaflet, email: parents@pro-music.org

Contact organisations:

Childnet International

Childnet International is a non-profit organisation working in partnership with others around the world to help make the internet a great and safe place for children. Registered as a charity in the UK (No 1080173), from January 2011 Childnet is the European Commission appointed Safer Internet Centre for the UK.

www.childnet.com
www.kidsmart.org.uk
www.digizen.org

Music Matters

The Music Matters campaign is a collective effort by artists and all those who work in and around music to remind listeners of its enduring value. Music Matters highlights the value of music and educates consumers on how to identify and obtain music from legitimate sources.

To help consumers make the ethical choice when looking for music online, a Music Matters trust mark has been developed to certify legitimate digital music services and leading music retailers.

www.whymusicmatters.org

Pro-music

Pro-music is a coalition of people and organisations working across the music sector. The international alliances of musicians, performers, music publishers, major and independent record companies and retailers across the music industry have joined forces to promote the many different ways in which people can enjoy music safely and legitimately online.

www.pro-music.org

Industry Trust for IP Awareness

The Industry Trust was set up by the film, TV and video industry in 2004 to promote copyright and the positive role that it plays in helping to protect creative ideas and secure the livelihoods of the 150,000 people in the UK who work in this area. The Industry Trust works to raise awareness of the growing range of legal film and TV sources available to consumers today.

www.industrytrust.co.uk

Find Any Film

Findanyfilm.com is a website set up and funded by the UK Film Council and supported by the Industry Trust. The site gives information about where, when and how people can watch, buy, rent and download films legally in the UK. It offers links to recognisable sites with a price comparison so that consumers can get the best deal.

www.findanyfilm.com