



**Childnet**  
International

# Downloading

There are many great ways of accessing and downloading music, film, TV and video safely online and it is important that children and young people understand how to download content legally. This advice page provides introductory information about how to enjoy entertainment online in a safe and legal way.

## 1. Music, film and TV on the internet - what you should know:

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 penalties. For more information on copyright, read our [useful guide](#).

## 2. Staying tuned in while staying legal:

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 can buy downloaded tracks, albums, TV shows, videos or films to play on a computer, or a portable device or on a music player, like iTunes. Others charge a monthly subscription fee and let you stream from an internet-connected device at any time, like Spotify or Netflix. Some services provide entertainment for free, supported by advertising.

## 3. What you can and can't do with music, film and TV online:

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

### **Are you aware of what's on your family computer?**

Make sure that the computer 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 users in your house.

services can, in theory, be used legally, but, in practice, nearly all the content on them is illegal. 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, although most material is copyrighted. If your child is making a Youtube video and wants to put music behind it, it is important they search for “royalty free music” or “creative commons music” which are free, but usually states that you must acknowledge the source of the music. Some content is free and exists in the public domain, which means the exclusive intellectual property rights have expired or the original creator has given permission for the content to be enjoyed for free. Examples include the works of Beethoven, or the works of Shakespeare. Intellectual property rights are country dependent, and material that is in the public domain in one country, may not be in a different country so it is important to check. Some content is marked with a **Creative Commons** license that clearly explains how it can or cannot be used by others.

#### 4. Staying safe and responsible:

Illegal file-sharing programmes and websites pose greater risks to your computer or mobile phone than legitimate sites. Users often unwittingly download viruses or spyware and can inadvertently share personal computer files and information. Some files are purposely misnamed on file-sharing and peer-to-peer networks to trick people into downloading them.

#### 5. Tips for parents:

- Are you aware of how your children are using their devices to access music, film and TV? Talk to your children about their online activities so that they understand why it's important to use legal sites online.
- Speak also about the moral issues – if you are getting something for free that you know you should pay for – is that right? It is also worth discussing with them what the consequences would be for the whole family if they were caught breaking the law, as it is usually the bill payer in the house who receives a caution if your internet service provider (ISP) suspects a household of illegal downloading.
- If you are unsure of a certain site, visit **Get it Right from a Genuine Site** which lists the legal ways you can download film and music.

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