

# Copyright and Open Source Licences

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# Outline

- Intellectual property and copyright
- Types of open source licences
- How to use open source licences
- Issues with open source licences

# Intellectual property and copyright

- Intellectual property: copyright, patents, trademarks, designs, etc.
  - Facets of the human mind
  - Intellectual property vs. physical property
- Licences
- Copyright and copyleft

# GNU licences

- General Public Licence (GPL)
  - GPL v3 released last year
- Library General Public Licence (LGPL)
- Free Documentation Licence (GFDL)

# Creative Commons licences

- Mix and choose:
  - Attribution?
  - Commercial?
  - Derivative works?
  - Share-alike?
- Commons deed, legal code

# Common themes

- Permission to redistribute
- Purport to be irrevocable

# Easy to use

- Typically just state it, e.g. include in file or document
- Multiple licences

# Commercial software or content

- Copyright owners still have all rights
- Can issue additional licences
- Free as in beer vs. free as in speech

# Can you license it?

- It must be your IP
- Be careful in employment, study

# Tainting, derivative works, mixed licences

- Release modifications also?
- Whether derivative work is legal issue:
  - Statically or dynamically linked executables
- Mixing content with different licences: compatible?

## Legal risk: enforceability and revocation

- Common law based on precedents
- Contract or licence?
  - Are open source licences revocable?
  - Consideration
- Licence breach is copyright violation

# Licence requirements

- GFDL requirements quite clumsy: notice and history
- CC licences more flexible
- Use the right licence

# Summary

- Copyleft licences work with creator's copyright
- Many different flavours
- Some legal uncertainties