

Best Practices for Posting Readings to ELMS

1. If the material is protected by copyright, conduct a Fair Use analysis.

The [Fair Use doctrine](#) permits certain uses without the copyright owner's permission. Whether a use is fair or not depends on four factors. We recommend using a [Fair Use Checklist](#) to help determine if posting a reading to ELMS is fair, or if you need to seek permission.

2. It's usually better to link to an e-resource than to post PDFs.

E-resources are governed by licenses that dictate what you can do legally with these materials. Linking to the full-text of an e-resource obviates the need to conduct a fair use analysis, and you avoid any potential license restrictions related to sharing PDFs. When in doubt about what a license permits, check the terms of use.

3. For library e-resources, it's best to proxy the permalink.

Permanent URLs with a proxy prefix make it easier for your students to access materials on or off campus. Tips on finding permalinks are available [here](#), and you can then use the Libraries' [Proxy Link Generator](#) to quickly generate a short, proxy link.

4. For library e-books, verify the number of people that can use them.

Not all e-books are created equal. Some allow multiple users to read it; others allow only one at a time. Some limit the number of uses, which means access could end unexpectedly. Before assigning an e-book, make sure it permits unlimited users. [This chart](#) can help.

5. If you post a PDF, be sure to include a copyright notice and attribution.

You should provide attribution for the original creator and copyright owner, and make sure your students know the material may be protected by copyright. We recommend including a copy of the book's title and copyright pages, along with a clearly visible notice statement indicating copyright protection and warning against further reproduction or distribution.

6. Remember that the Libraries are here to help!

Course Reserves staff can handle these tasks for instructors that place items on [e-reserves](#). If you prefer to post the readings yourself, specific questions concerning copyright can be directed to lib-copyright@umd.edu and ones about licensing to libcshelp@umd.edu.



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Want to learn more?

Visit <http://lib.guides.umd.edu/copyright>