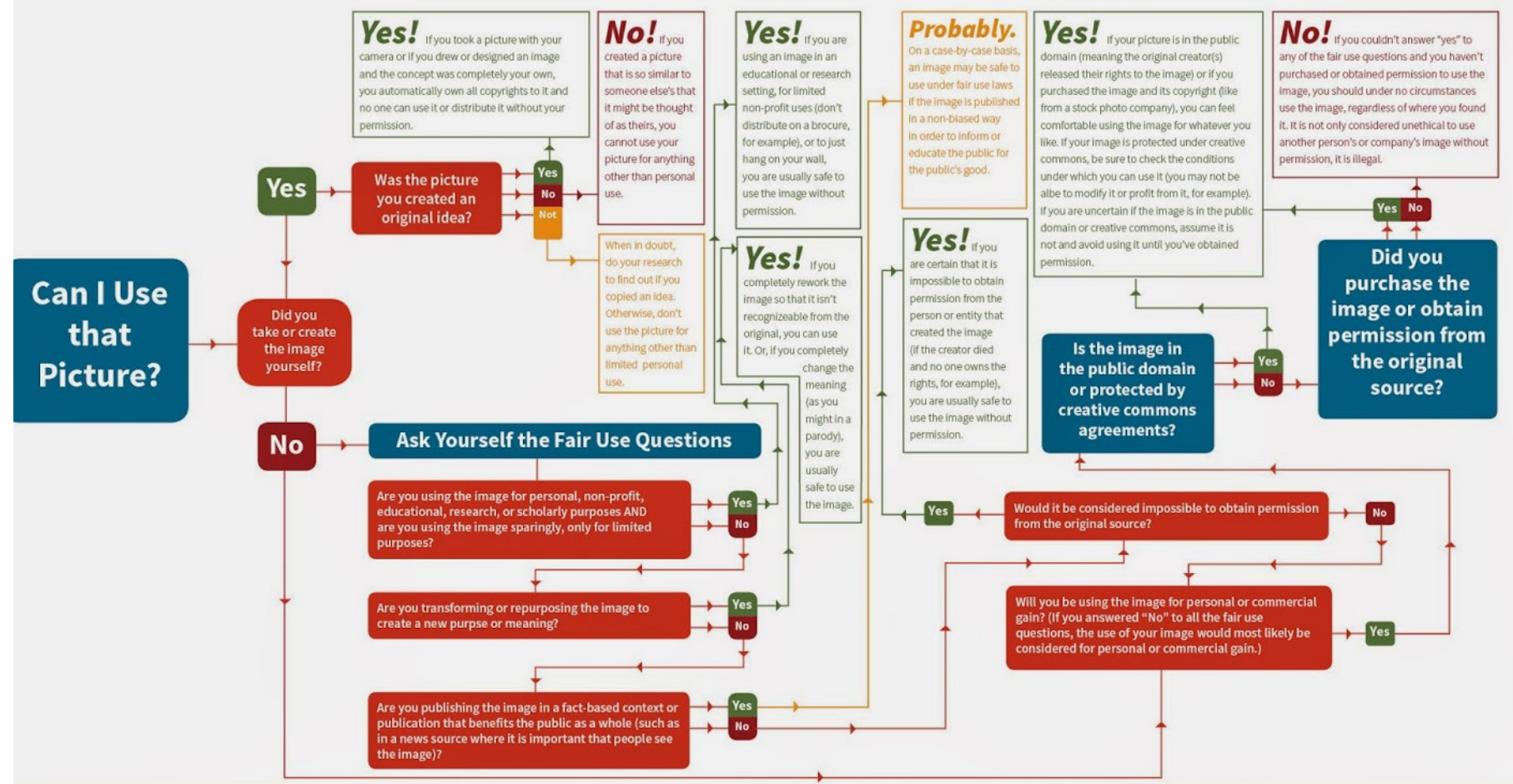


Can I Use that Picture?

The Terms, Laws, and Ethics for Using Copyrighted Images



What if I found the picture on social media or a website?

While the laws about distributing images through social media channels like Facebook, Pinterest, and blogs are still fuzzy, it is generally considered acceptable to redistribute an image that was originally intended to be publicly viewed by the creator. This is why you will typically find original images re-posted on blogs, news sites, and social media channels even if the person re-distributing the images didn't obtain permission to do so.

However, much depends on the way in which you intend to use the image. It is unethical to redistribute an image on Facebook, for example, if a person didn't intend for the image to go public in the first place. It is also a form of plagiarism to post an image on your blog or website without citing the original source (and it is considered best practice to link back to the original source as well).

Pay attention to the fair use laws and other questions to the left when considering using other images you find online. Be careful about using others' images for personal gain, commercial gain, and even formal presentations without obtaining permission first.

Copyright

The protection given to any created image or work from being copied or distributed without permission. All images are immediately given copyright to the creator when the image is created.

Fair Use

The legal right to use copyrighted images as long as the images are used for educational, research, or personal or use or as long as the image benefits the public good in some way.

Creative Commons

Images that are copyrighted but that the creator has put provisions on their use. A creative commons license might stipulate, for example, that an image can be used as long as it isn't modified in any way.

Public Domain

Images that no longer have copyright restrictions either because the creator willingly relinquished their copyright or because the creator is dead and no one owns the copyright.