

What are Open Educational Resources?

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Open educational resources, or OER, are teaching and learning materials, including but not limited to full courses, lesson plans, videos, images, modules, or textbooks. OER are in the public domain or openly licensed, which means they are free to use and repurpose.

The 5 Rs describe how you can use OER.

First, anyone is free to reuse OER. This means you can take a resource as-is and use it in a wide range of ways, such as sharing it with a class or posting it on a website.

Anyone who uses or creates an OER retains the right to keep a copy of the resource forever. This means you won't lose access to the material, unlike resources with temporary access, such as digital subscriptions.

Anyone is free to revise OER. This means you can change or adapt it. For example, you can translate existing OER content to another language or edit the text to include updated research.

Anyone can remix OER, combining original or revised content with other open resources. They can mix them together to create something new, like a mashup video or a customized textbook.

And finally, anyone can redistribute OER by sharing copies of the original content, their revisions, or their remixes.

Ideally, an OER would meet all of these criteria; however, some creators have licensed their materials to restrict certain uses. For example, some do not allow revisions to their original work, and others may request that anyone who revises or remixes an OER share their new resource with a similar license.

If you want to learn more about OER, visit the Open Education Services department website at libraries.uh.edu/oer.