

Downloading and sharing music – legally

Young people can get hold of music from many different sources, including download sites, blogs and social networking sites. They can swap tracks between computers, mobiles and portable music players.

It's important to understand the difference between illegally downloading copyrighted music, and buying or listening to online music legally.

Talking points

- It's against the law to use or share copyrighted material like music without permission.
- Know the risks when you look for 'free' music online. Some files are intentionally misnamed to trick people into downloading them.
- Peer-to-peer software works by opening 'doors' into your computer that could give someone access to your private files and leave your computer vulnerable to attack. Make sure it is protected with anti-virus software and a firewall.
- You can download software that lets you chat with other people. Be careful not to reveal any personal information to strangers.
- Parents or carers could be held responsible for what happens on the family computer even if they're not doing anything illegal. Check together that you're not at risk from viruses and that there is nothing on the computer that shouldn't be there.