

Source Code Licenses

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Main Properties of Licenses

- ✦ In decreasing order of importance:
- ✦ Commercial use
- ✦ Derivative works
- ✦ “Share alike” / Source code
- ✦ Attribution
- ✦ The first three are often show-stoppers, the last can be

Main License Types

- ✦ Public domain
- ✦ Intrinsic
- ✦ GPL / LGPL
- ✦ MPL
- ✦ BSD
- ✦ MIT
- ✦ Creative Commons

Public Domain

- ✦ Completely permissive
- ✦ Virtually no protection from liability
- ✦ Must be explicitly dedicated to the public domain
- ✦ GDS: can usually use, but should do due diligence and make client aware of use. (**)

- ✧ <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/publicdomain/>

Intrinsic

- ✦ If no license is specified, then works revert to copyright law. Posted work is inherently protected by copyright.
- ✦ No license = no permission.
- ✦ GDS: Can't use, contact creator. (****)

GPL

- ✧ GNU General Public License
- ✧ Commercial projects allowed, but...
- ✧ Derivative works must be licensed under GPL
- ✧ Full source code must be released publicly
- ✧ Non permissive
- ✧ GDS: except rare exceptions, cannot use at all (****)

✦ <http://www.fsf.org/licensing/licenses/gpl.html>

LGPL

- ✧ GNU Lesser General Public License
- ✧ Allows **dynamic** linking of LGPL licenses in proprietary (commercial) projects - hard to do in AS!
- ✧ Must allow users to swap the library
- ✧ Modifications to the library must be shared under LGPL or GPL, including subclasses (!)
- ✧ Attribution required in source code and documentation
- ✧ GDS: Theoretically usable, but technically difficult (***)

- ✦ <http://www.fsf.org/licenses/lgpl.html>

MPL

- ✧ Mozilla Public License
- ✧ Commercial use and derivative works allowed
- ✧ Modified code must be distributed under MPL
- ✧ Definition of a Modification is permissive: original MPL files or new files containing copied MPL code
- ✧ Attribution: must include instructions to get the MPL source code (ex. Read Me, or About screen)
- ✧ GDS: Generally quite usable (**)

- ✧ <http://www.mozilla.org/MPL/MPL-1.1.html>
- ✧ <http://www.oss-watch.ac.uk/resources/mpl.xml>

BSD

- ✦ Commercial use and derivative works allowed
- ✦ Attribution required in source and compiled (text of license and copyright)
- ✦ New (3 clause) and old (4 clause) versions.
 - ✦ 4 clause version requires attribution in ALL marketing materials!
- ✦ GDS: 3 clause generally usable (**), 4 clause not (****)

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MIT / X11

- ✦ Very permissive
- ✦ Commercial use, derivative works allowed
- ✦ Attribution only required in source code (full license / ©)
- ✦ This is what we use to share code publicly
- ✦ GDS: Very usable. (*)

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- ✦ Details of attribution is left to the licensor - important to check
- ✦ Specifically not recommended for source code licensing
- ✦ GDS: Usage very much dependent on terms (* - ****)

More Info

http://developer.kde.org/documentation/licensing/licenses_summary.html

<http://www.fsf.org/licensing/licenses/lgpl-java.html>

IMPORTANT!!

You must check with me and/or the client before including ANY pre-existing source code (including our own) into ANY project.