



# How To Make Your Own Work Open Access

## Citation

How to make your own work open access. A dynamic set of instructions that will be updated as needed. Version 1.0 launched October 23, 2012. <http://bit.ly/how-oa>.

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# How to make your own work open access

From Harvard Open Access Project

- This page is part of the Harvard Open Access Project (<http://cyber.law.harvard.edu/hoap>) (HOAP).
- I (Peter Suber (<http://bit.ly/suber-gplus>) ) wrote these notes as an online handout for a talk

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(<http://cyber.law.harvard.edu/events/luncheon/2012/10/OAweek>) at the Berkman Center on October 23, 2012. These notes focus on OA for peer-reviewed research articles and their unrefereed preprints, and do not cover books, theses and dissertations, conference presentations, datasets, courseware, audio, video, multimedia, or source code. The live audience for the talk consisted of Harvard people, which explains the many Harvard references. But the sources cited will be useful for scholars anywhere. The full title of the talk was, *How to Make Your Research Open Access (Whether You're at Harvard or Not)*.

- Now that I've got the notes online, I welcome (<mailto:peter.suber@gmail.com>) suggestions.
- My slides from the talk are less useful than this handout. But FYI, here are the slides ([https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1F7M6I8PyCGDXmfE96llnu21S8Eu\\_rx\\_ubwUANBNMeEU/edit](https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1F7M6I8PyCGDXmfE96llnu21S8Eu_rx_ubwUANBNMeEU/edit))
- Also see Chapter 10 ("Self-help") of my book, *Open Access* (MIT Press, 2012).
- Suggested short URL for this page = [bit.ly/how-oa](http://bit.ly/how-oa) (<http://bit.ly/how-oa>)

## Publish in an OA journal ("gold" OA)

- Find a suitable OA journal. Go to the Directory of Open Access Journals (<http://www.doaj.org/>) (DOAJ) and browse by field.
  - Some will be high in quality, impact, and prestige. Some will be low.
  - Some will use liberal open licenses, like CC-BY (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0>) . Some will use more restrictive open licenses like CC-BY-NC (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/3.0>) or CC-BY-NC-ND (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/3.0>) . Some will offer only gratis OA without open licenses.
  - Some will charge publication fees (also called article processing charges), and some will not.
  - If the best journal for your purposes charges a publication fee, see whether your funder or university will pay it.
    - There's no complete list of funders willing to pay publication fees on behalf of grantees. But see the incomplete list (<http://www.biomedcentral.com/about/apcfaq/grants>) from BioMed Central. If the article you want to publish is based on funded research, check with your funding agency directly.
    - Many universities ([http://oad.simmons.edu/oadwiki/OA\\_journal\\_funds](http://oad.simmons.edu/oadwiki/OA_journal_funds)) are willing to pay publication fees on behalf of faculty.
    - If you're at Harvard, apply to the Harvard Open-Access Publishing (<http://osc.hul.harvard.edu/HOPE/>) (HOPE) fund. For a Harvard-based project to spread HOPE-like funds to other institutions, see the Compact for Open-Access Publishing Equity (<http://www.oacomcompact.org/>) (COPE).
- Then submit your manuscript, just as you would to a conventional journal.
- If you don't find a suitable OA journal, check again when you publish your next paper. Things are changing fast.

## Deposit in an OA repository ("green" OA)

- Find a suitable institutional or disciplinary repository for your work.
  - Institutional repositories try to capture the research output of an institution. Disciplinary repositories try to capture the research output of a field.
  - Consult the Directory of Open Access Repositories (<http://www.openoar.org/>) (OpenDOAR) or the Registry of Open Access Repositories (<http://roar.eprints.org/>) (ROAR). Both list both sorts of repository. Also see the list of disciplinary repositories ([http://oad.simmons.edu/oadwiki/Disciplinary\\_repositories](http://oad.simmons.edu/oadwiki/Disciplinary_repositories)) at the Open Access Directory (<http://oad.simmons.edu>) .
- Harvard's institutional repository is called Digital Access to Scholarship at Harvard (<http://dash.harvard.edu/>) or DASH.
  - Anyone with an active Harvard ID may deposit (<http://osc.hul.harvard.edu/dash/quicksubmit>) in DASH. Students and Fellows: that includes you.
- If there isn't an OA repository in your institution or field, then consider a universal repository like OpenDepot (<http://opendepot.org/>) , Academia (<http://www.academia.edu/>) , or Mendeley (<http://www.mendeley.com/>) .
  - You could also post your work to your personal home page. But repositories are a better long-term solution. They take steps toward digital preservation, they provide persistent URLs, and they will continue to hold your work and make it OA after you change jobs or die.
- Most of the time, publishing in a non-OA journal is compatible with depositing in an OA repository. Unfortunately this is the best-kept secret of OA. Details in the section on permissions below.

## Permissions

- Whether you make your work OA through a journal a repository ("gold" or "green" OA), the provider will need permission to make it OA. But permission from whom? The answer depends on what happened to the rights after you wrote the article.
- When you write a new article, you are the copyright holder. You needn't apply for a copyright or register the work. It's automatic. If you haven't yet transferred rights to others, then permission for OA comes from you.
  - You may authorize publication in an OA journal (gold OA). Just sign the publishing contract.
  - You may authorize OA through a repository (green OA) for an *unpublished* preprint. Just make the deposit and click on the box (or equivalent) to affirm that you have the right to do so. However, if you want to deposit a *published* article, then in most cases you will already have transferred some rights to a publisher, which complicates the process. See next.
- If you want to deposit a published article in a repository, then the repository will need permission from the relevant rightsholder.
  - If you retained key rights when you published, which is rare, then you may authorize OA through a repository on your own. You needn't consult or involve the publisher.
  - If you transferred key rights to the publisher, which is common, then you will need the publisher's permission.
  - However, most (<http://www.sherpa.ac.uk/romeo/statistics.php>) conventional or non-OA publishers give standing permission for author-initiated green OA.
    - To see whether your journal or publisher gives this kind of standing permission, read your publishing agreement with care. Or look up the journal or publisher in the SHERPA RoMEO database (<http://www.sherpa.ac.uk/romeo.php>) .
    - In most cases, this kind of standing permission for green OA applies to the text approved by peer review, not to the published edition. To take advantage of this permission, you'll need to put your hands on that version of the text, without any subsequent copy editing, and without the journal's pagination or look-and-feel. Tip for the future: always retain the peer-reviewed manuscript of every article you publish.
    - SHERPA also maintains a shorter list (<http://www.sherpa.ac.uk/romeo/PDFandIR.php?la=en>) of publishers who give standing permission for authors to deposit the *published editions* of articles in an OA repository.
  - If your journal or publisher does *not* give standing permission for green OA, then try one of these strategies.
    - Ask for permission. Many publishers who don't give standing permission will agree to case-by-case requests.
    - Use an author addendum ([http://oad.simmons.edu/oadwiki/Author\\_addenda](http://oad.simmons.edu/oadwiki/Author_addenda)) . An author addendum is

a proposed revision to the publishing agreement, written by a lawyer, giving the author the right to authorize OA (and sometimes other rights as well). Because it's only a proposed revision, publishers may accept it or reject it.

- For standing permission to make your future articles OA, without depending on publishers for that permission, work toward a Harvard-style OA policy (<http://osc.hul.harvard.edu/modelpolicy>) at your institution.
  - Today seven of Harvard's nine schools have effective OA policies (<http://osc.hul.harvard.edu/>) .
  - The Harvard Open Access Project (<http://cyber.law.harvard.edu/hoap>) (HOAP) can help you with a policy at your institution. Also see the HOAP guide to good practices for university OA policies, written by me and Stuart Shieber.
  - Through Harvard-style OA policies, faculty grant the institution non-exclusive rights to their future scholarly articles, including the right to authorize OA through the institutional repository. This assures that faculty may make their work OA...
    - even when they publish in a non-OA journal,
    - even when the non-OA journal does not give standing permission for green OA,
    - and even when faculty members have not negotiated special access terms or permissions with their publishers.

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