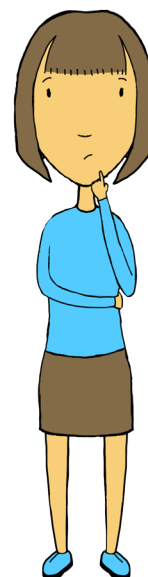


Illegal Downloading



What teens should know about illegal downloading and the risks

What is intellectual property?

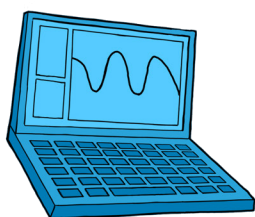
Intellectual property is the term given to any idea that is legally protected. The 'idea' can be anything—a song, poem, movie, invention or theory. Intellectual property is protected by copyrights, patents and trademarks.

Music, movies and games

These can sometimes be expensive but if you download them illegally you need to understand that you are depriving artists who created the music, movies and games of income for their work and this has serious penalties.

Every song you hear on the radio, each movie you see in a cinema, or a program you watch on TV, is protected by intellectual property. Downloading (including piracy and file sharing) music, movies and TV series, is illegal according to Australian law.

If you're caught with any illegally downloaded files or software that can be used to download files, like Kazaa, Bearshare, Limewire or Morpheus, there are serious penalties; you could face a fine of up to \$60,500 or spend up to five years in prison!



Copyright infringement

The copyright legislation in Australia regarding the use of digitised media is relatively straightforward.

There are no grey areas in relation to what constitutes copying because it is simply illegal to download, upload, reproduce, remake or remix any copyright protected material without the express permission of the copyright owner.

This means that in terms of music (even if you purchased it legitimately in the first instance), it is illegal to place music in a shared folder connected to a peer-to-peer (P2P) file-sharing network, to burn a CD, or even to convert a CD into an MP3 (Australian Copyright Council 2004).

Whenever you connect to the Internet, your IP address is traceable. Downloading illegal music is much like shoplifting a CD. The music industry loses about \$4.2 billion dollars worldwide every year for pirated music and often prosecutes offenders.

Many teens and adults claim that they were unaware of the laws that surround the illegal downloading of music but this is not a good enough excuse. If you are caught with illegal music on your computer you can still face a serious penalty.