



Student Guide to Figure Citations

An Adaptation of APA Style Guidelines

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Not Even “Real APA”

The *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (often referred to as the APA Manual) does have a chapter (Ch. 7) on using figures and tables, but those guidelines tend not to suit most Lethbridge College assignments. The writers of the APA Manual (2020) “encourage writers, instructors, departments, and academic institutions using APA Style outside of the journal publication context to adapt APA Style to fit their needs” (p. 10). This guide is exactly that: an adaptation of APA Style designed to suit the needs of Lethbridge College students using figures in their assignments.

Generally, the guidelines in this Lethbridge College adaptation are meant for posters, presentations, and other visual assignments while the full APA guidelines are meant for higher level academic papers and journal publications. However, we always recommend asking your instructor which guidelines to use, regardless of the type of assignment you are working on.

If you plan to complete a bachelor's or graduate degree in your field, you will likely have to follow the full APA figure citation guidelines eventually. But rest assured that, while we have deviated from the APA guidelines, we've done so in a superficial way. Learning these guidelines will not only help you create more effective posters and presentations right now, but also help you learn the full APA guidelines later.

How to Find Images that are Easier to Cite

Have you tried to cite an image you found through Google's image search, but couldn't figure out who created it, when it was created, the title, copyright information, and so on? Use the following suggestions to avoid this frustration:

- **Use your browser's advanced search option:** Find free and/or public domain images through the advanced search feature in most search engines. These images simplify copyright and permission concerns. For help using advanced search features, contact Buchanan Library or Learning Café staff.
- **Use Library databases:** Many library databases include images, and usually the information required to cite them correctly. Finding images in databases can be challenging, but Buchanan Library staff can teach you how to effectively search databases and other library resources, improving your research and information literacy skills.
- **Find your source before you find your image:** Before searching for generic images, think about which websites might include images relevant to your topic. For example, if you need a picture of a calming nature scene for your presentation on mindful meditation, search “nature photographer” to find photography websites or go directly to something like the National Geographic website. These sources often provide photographers names, dates, and licence agreements, which make citing easier. If you use only one or two images from a collection for educational purposes, you can use these images under fair dealing.

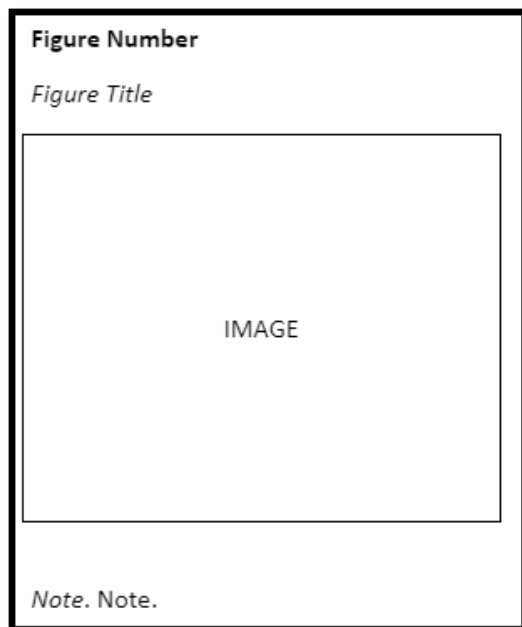
Figure Elements

The figure elements in this section apply to original as well as reprinted and adapted images. In APA (2020) practice, almost all images are referred to as figures. Figures can be charts, drawings, photographs, diagrams, and other visual representations—pretty much everything except tables (see notes below). APA style requires that every figure have the following elements:

1. **Figure number.** The figure number should be **bolded** and go above the figure; figures should be numbered in the order they appear: Figure 1, Figure 2, etc.
2. **Title.** Titles should be *italicized* using title-style capitalization and go one double-spaced line beneath the figure number.
3. **Figure.** After the number and the title, insert the chart, graph, photograph, or other visual depiction.
4. **Notes.** Directly below the figure, include clarifying notes and/or permission notes, as needed:
 - *Clarifying notes* are optional and include any information necessary for your reader to interpret the image. If it is reasonable for this information to go in-text, put it there instead.
 - *Permission notes* are required for reprinted and adapted images and go after clarifying notes, if there are any. Refer to the “Figure Citations” section starting on page 6.

If your figure note is long, complicated, or has multiple points in it, we recommend either trying to include some note information in-text or consulting the full note guidelines on page 229 of the seventh edition of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (2020).

Template



Notes about Tables

If you reprint a table created by somebody else, your table is just like any other image. Use the guidelines for figures.

If you create your own table, use the guidelines in the *APA Student Guide* (pp. 18, 19). The table will have similar elements to a figure: table number, title, table, and notes.

If you adapt a table or part of a table from a source, check out this helpful blog post, [Navigating Copyright: How to Cite Sources in a Table](#), and/or talk to your instructor and/or Learning Café staff.

Figure Citations: Permission Notes and Copyright Attributions

When you reprint or adapt a figure from a source, you must give credit to the source. Appropriate credit for figures includes copyright information. Copyright is legally binding and more relevant for images than for text, so make sure you look into copyright for any image that you use. In our adapted approach to figure citations (see “Not even ‘Real APA’” on page 4), there are two parts:

- a permission note (acts like an in-text citation)
- a copyright attribution (acts like a reference entry)

A **reprinted figure** is an image that appears exactly as it did in the original source. An image is reprinted if you copy and paste the image and do not alter it. In the permission note, use the word ‘Reprinted’. In the copyright attribution, use the word ‘From’.

An **adapted figure** is an image that has been altered in some way. An image is adapted if you crop it, photoshop it, superimpose text over it, add a filter to it, etc. In the permission note, use the word ‘Adapted’. In the copyright attribution, use the words ‘Adapted from’.

Permission Notes

The permission note goes in the figure note under the image (see page 5 for guidelines on figure notes). This note indicates that you did not create the image and that the reader can refer to your Figure Credits list for more information about the source (see page 14 for guidelines on writing the Figure Credits List).

First, indicate if your figure is reprinted or adapted. Then, indicate the copyright situation that permits you to use the figure. To determine which copyright situation applies, look for copyright information at the bottom/end of a webpage or document, below an image, or at the end of a larger collection or book. Copyright is legally binding and more relevant for images than for text, so make sure you look into copyright for any image that you use. The most common situation for students is fair dealing, but any of these four situations could apply:

Public Domain

Public domain images are the easiest type of image to use, because they are published without any copyright restrictions. However, public domain images are not very common and are sometimes hard to find. For tips on finding public domain images, see the “How to Find Images that are Easier to Cite” section on page 4.

In the permission note, use the words ‘Reprinted/Adapted under the public domain’.

Fair Dealing

Fair dealing is the most common situation for students, since most student assignments are only for education and not for widespread publication or profit. In order to qualify for fair dealing, the Lethbridge College (2019) *Copyright Policy* states that you must give credit to your source and satisfy **both** of these requirements:

1. The image is being used “for the purpose of research, private study, education, parody, satire, criticism, review, or news reporting” (p. 4).
2. The image is a short excerpt, which is defined in one of these ways:
 - “an entire artistic work (including a painting, print, photograph, diagram, drawing, map, chart, or plan) from a copyright-protected work containing other artistic works” (p. 2). For example, you can reprint one or two photographs from an online album or profile containing many photographs. You can’t use all the photographs from the album.
 - “up to 10 per cent of a copyright-protected work (including a literary work, musical score, sound recording, or audiovisual work)” (p. 2). In the examples on page 8, Figure 2 qualifies as fair dealing because the screenshot is less than 10 per cent of the full audiovisual work, the episode of the TV series.

In the permission note, use the words ‘Reprinted/Adapted under fair dealing’.

Permission

Permission is gained through asking the image creator whether you can use their work. When contacting the creator, indicate clearly which image you would like to use and why and how you intend to use it. Do not use the image until you have permission and try to get written and dated permission that you can refer to later.

In the permission note, use the words ‘Reprinted/Adapted with permission’.

Licence Agreements

Licence agreements indicate who can use an image and how. These agreements often appear on a page on the website or on a banner at the bottom of a webpage. The most common licence agreements are creative commons licences. If you are using an image under a licence agreement, ensure you are adhering to all conditions listed in the agreement and that you mention the agreement by name or an accepted abbreviation. Hyperlink the name or abbreviation to the agreement if possible. For example, one common creative commons licence is CC BY-SA 2.0. See “How to Find Images that are Easier to Cite” on page 4 for tips on how to find images that are licensed as free to use.

In the permission note, use the words ‘Reprinted/Adapted under [name of licence agreement]’.

Examples

For the respective copyright attributions for each figure, see the “Figure Credits List” on page 14.

Public domain photograph from a database – Multiple creators and no date

Figure 1

Woman Washes Vegetables

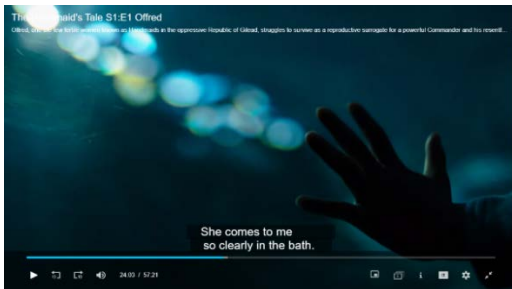


Note. Reprinted under the public domain.

Screenshot from a TV series – All information available

Figure 2

She Comes to Me

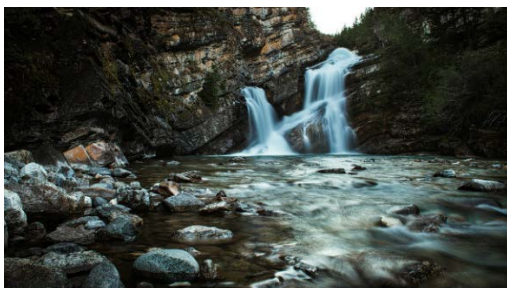


Note. Screenshot taken at 24:03. Reprinted under fair dealing.

Photograph under a Creative Commons licence – All information available

Figure 3

Cameron Falls in Waterton Lakes National Park

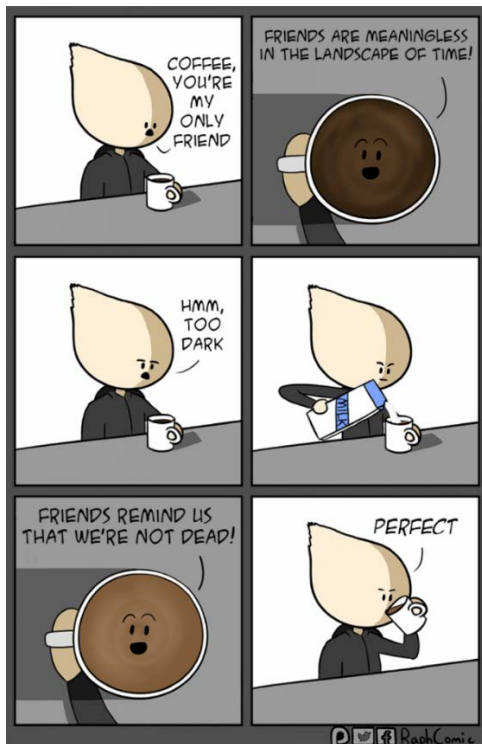


Note. Reprinted under [CC BY-SA 2.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.0/).

Comic from an independent artist – No copyright date

Figure 4

The Perfect Blend

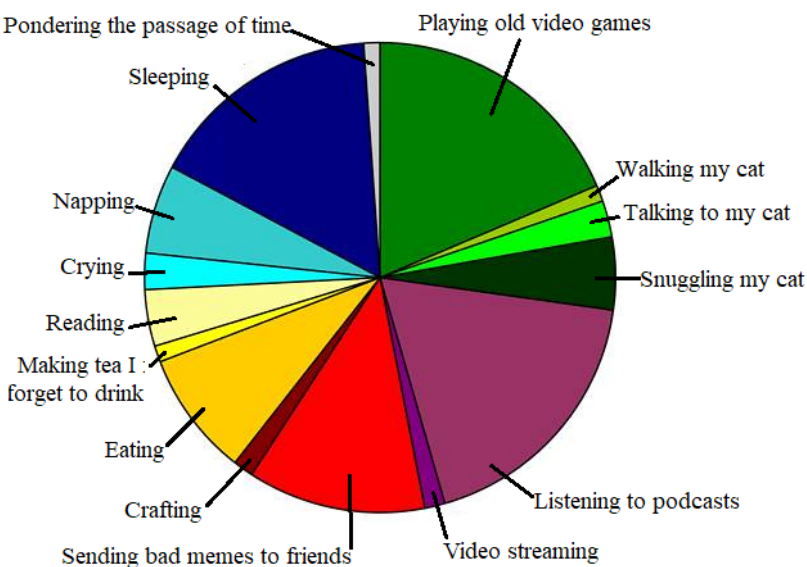


Note. An example of visual personification creating humour. Reprinted with permission.

A Pie chart taken from a digital database and altered – Creator uses a pseudonym

Figure 5

Division of My Free Time



Note. Adapted under the public domain.

Copyright Attributions

Each copyright attribution is made up of three main components: the figure number and reprinted or adapted status, the source information, and the copyright and permission statement. The source information is further broken down into these five parts: title, creator(s), date, publication information, and link. Try to provide appropriate information as explained here and shown in the template chart below. If you can't find all the information, the world will keep turning. Check out the section on "Missing Information" (see page 12) for guidelines on how to deal with common situations.

Components

Figure number and reprinted or adapted status

First, put the figure number in bold. The figure number is the easiest way to match the copyright attribution to the figure. List copyright attributions in the order the figures appear (Figure 1, Figure 2, etc.). If your figure is reprinted, use the word 'From'. If your figure is adapted, use the words 'Adapted from'.

Source information

The source information has five parts. If you can't find information for all five parts, check out the section on "Missing Information" (see page 12) for guidelines on how to deal with common situations.

Title

This is the title of the document or article that you got the image from. The image could come from an academic, news, or wiki article, a downloadable PDF, a video, a book, etc. If your image is from a database or social media platform, you may not have a document/article title.

Creator(s)

This is whoever or whatever created the image. Sometimes, this is the name of a photographer or artist, but it may also be a social media handle/alias/username or a group/institution. You might have to list multiple creators.

Date

This is the most recent date of publication. Even if there are earlier publications/versions of this image, use the publication date you found. If the image is part of an article, then the publication date is the same as the article. If the image was posted on social media, then the publication date is the date the post was made. If the image is from a database, the database should include either a publication or creation date. If both a publication and creation date are included, use the publication date. If you cannot find any dates, use 'n.d.' for 'no date'.

Publication information

This is essentially whatever title is "above" or "larger" than the document the image appears in. If the image is from a journal article, then this is the title of the journal. If the image is from a news article, then this is likely the website or institution that produced the news article (*Global News*, for example). If the name/title that would go here is listed as the creator or stated in the copyright statement, then it is appropriate to

exclude this component. Volume and issue numbers are only necessary for periodicals, such as journals or comic books.

Link

This is usually the URL of the webpage the image appears on. However, if the image appears in an academic journal or an e-book, it may be necessary to find a permalink or doi link, as the link which appears in your internet browser may not lead your reader to your source.

Copyright and permission statement

This statement relates to the permission note and the four copyright situations (public domain, fair dealing, permission, and licence agreements—see pages 6–7 for more information). To determine which copyright situation applies, look for copyright information at the bottom/end of a webpage or document, below an image, or at the end of a larger collection or book. The most common situation for most students and assignments is fair dealing. Copyright is legally binding and more relevant for images than for text, so make sure you look into copyright for any image that you use. Based on the copyright situation for your figure, choose one of the four statements shown in the template chart.

Template

Figure # and reprinted or adapted status	Source Info					Copyright and permission statement
	Title	Creator	Date	Publication info	Link	
Figure X. From OR Figure X. Adapted from	<i>Title of webpage</i> OR <i>Title of a book, report, or other stand-alone document (p. xx¹),</i> OR "Title of article or chapter or other part of a larger document,"	by A. A. Creator, B. B. Creator, and C. C. Creator, OR by Group Creator,	Year,	Website Name OR Publisher OR <i>Title of Periodical, Volume(Issue), p. xx²</i>	(DOI). OR (URL).	In the public domain OR Name (or abbreviated name) of licence agreement ³ OR Copyright year by Name of Copyright holder. Reprinted/Adapted with permission. OR Copyright year by Name of Copyright holder. Reprinted/Adapted under fair dealing.

¹ Provide the page number of the image if available.

² Provide the page number of the image if available.

³ For creative commons licences, you can use an abbreviated name. For example, "CC BY-NC".

Examples

Figure # and reprinted or adapted status	Source Info					Copyright and Permission statement
	Title	Creator	Date	Publication info	Link	
Figure 3: From	"Cameron Falls Landscape,"	by A. Baldwin (Photographer),	2009,	Flickr	(https://www.flickr.com/photos/40371771@N08/3747854594).	CC BY-SA 2.0.
Figure 4: From	<i>The Perfect Blend</i> [archival webpage],	by Raphcomics,	n.d.,		(https://raphcomic.com/comics/the-perfect-blend).	Copyright n.d. by Raphcomics. Reprinted with permission.
Figure 5: Adapted from	"Greek Y-DNA,"	by Hg J2-M172,	2020,	Flickr	(https://www.flickr.com/photos/j2-m172/49905629211/).	In the public domain.

The Perfect Example

This is what a copyright attribution would look like if you got your image from a public-access, academic journal article with all the components present.

Figure 1. From "10 Strategies to Improve Mental Wellness for Students," by J. Curly Head, J. Doe, and K. Singh, 2019, *Student Wellness*, 17(1), p. 11, (<http://www.studentwellness.ca/tenstrategies>). Copyright 2018 by The Institute of Student Wellness. Reprinted under fair dealing.

For more examples, see the "Figure Credits list" on page 14.

Missing Information

While the APA manual assumes you get most of your images from academic/scholarly/peer-reviewed articles, we all know that's usually not the case. Accordingly, most of your copyright attributions will be missing at least one piece of information. The general rule for writing copyright attributions with missing components is to omit or replace the missing information and then reword the copyright attribution so that it "reads well."

Try not to be discouraged by missing information. Images don't have to be from academic journals to be valuable, but it can be frustrating that non-academic sources often don't document their images and articles fully. Remember that copyright attributions have two purposes: 1) to give credit to the image/creators/publishers and 2) to help your reader find the source. So long as you've given credit to the right people or group and provided enough information for your reader to find the image, your copyright attribution has the right information.

No document title

If there is no document title, move the journal/institution name to the document title position. It may be necessary to add a brief explanation, like “an entry in...” or “an article in...”

Figure 1. From an article in *Student Wellness, Vol. 1(1)*, by J. Curly Head, J. Doe, and K. Singh, 2019, p. 11, (<http://www.studentwellness.ca/tenstrategies>). Copyright 2018 by The Institute of Student Wellness. Reprinted under fair dealing.

No creator

If there is no creator, exclude this component.

Figure 1. From “10 Strategies to Improve Mental Wellness for Students,” 2019, *Student Wellness, Vol. 1(1)*, p. 11, (<http://www.studentwellness.ca/tenstrategies>). Copyright 2018 by The Institute of Student Wellness. Reprinted under fair dealing.

No publication date

Put “n.d.” instead of a date. This shows your instructor/reader that you didn’t forget to put a date, but rather looked for a date and did not find one.

Figure 1. From “10 Strategies to Improve Mental Wellness for Students,” by J. Curly Head, J. Doe, and K. Singh, n.d., *Student Wellness, Vol. 1(1)*, p. 11, (<http://www.studentwellness.ca/tenstrategies>). Copyright n.d. by The Institute of Student Wellness. Reprinted under fair dealing.

No journal/website/institution title

This is unusual. Even images taken from a Google image search usually come from a website of some kind. Whatever webpage the image appears on, look at the URL. Whatever comes before .ca/.org/.com can often be used as the institution/website/publisher.

If there really isn’t a journal/website/institution/publisher, and your copyright attribution contains enough information for your reader/instructor to find the image, then exclude this information.

If there isn’t a journal/website/institution/publisher because you acquired the image through unconventional means, then describe where you found the image. For example:

Figure 1. From “10 Strategies to Improve Mental Wellness for Students,” n.d. Reprinted under fair dealing. Retrieved from a poster found outside AN1602 on January 20, 2020.

No URL

This should only occur when you’ve retrieved the image from a hard-copy source like a book or a printed magazine. If this is the case, then list the publisher if the publisher hasn’t already appeared in the attribution.

Figure 1. From “10 Strategies to Improve Mental Wellness for Students,” by J. Curly Head, J. Doe, and K. Singh, 2019, *Student Wellness, Vol. 1(1)*, p. 11, Good Humans Publishing. Copyright 2018 by The Institute of Student Wellness. Reprinted under fair dealing.

Different types of creators listed

There are lots of different reasons and ways this might happen, but we'll use the most common example to show you how to approach this. Let's say your image appears in a news article and the news article has an author, but the image has a caption listing a photographer. Who do you name as the creator? You have two options.

If you use the image and nothing else from the article, you should try to find the original source of the image. The article may have enough information to find the original source or even provide a link. Try clicking on the image or checking for a full bibliography entry in the article's reference list. You could also try searching the photographer's name; they may have a website or digital database of photos that the image appears in. If you are able to find the image's original source, provide a copyright attribution for that source and disregard the news article you originally found it in.

If you use other elements of the news article or can't find the original source, then list all creators and put their roles in parentheses behind their names.

Figure 1. From "10 Strategies to Improve Mental Wellness for Students," by J. Curly Head (Author), J. Doe (Author), and K. Singh (Photographer), 2019, *Student Wellness, Vol. 1(1)*, p. 11, (<http://www.studentwellness.ca/tenstrategies>). Copyright 2018 by The Institute of Student Wellness. Reprinted under fair dealing.

The Figure Credits List

General Formatting

A Figure Credits list is a list of copyright attributions for all your figures that were reprinted or adapted. In an essay or paper, this list appears before your references. For other assignments, such as posters or presentations, it is common practice to put your Figure Credits somewhere out-of-the-way but still visible, such as the last slide of a slideshow presentation or on the wall beside a poster. It is always best to ask your instructor where they would like your Figure Credits to go.

Regardless of where your Figure Credits list appears, it should be formatted much like your references list. This means that the Figure Credits list appears on a separate page or slide. The title should read "Figure Credits" and be centred and bolded at the top. The copyright attributions themselves should be listed in numerical order with hanging indents.

An Exception

If you create an image yourself, you do not need to give credit to anyone else, so you do not need a permission note or a copyright attribution. You do not need to list the figure in your Figure Credits. In text, you should have the normal figure elements (figure number, title, figure, notes as necessary—see "Figure Elements" on page 5).

Example

Figure Credits

Figure 1: From *Elderly, Woman, Kitchen, Cleaning, Carrots, Radishes*, by C.

Martin, D. Arlotta, & USDCDCP, n.d., Pixnio

([http://www.pixnio.com/people/female-women/elderly-woman-in-kitchen-pictured-as-she-was-thoroughly-cleaning-a-number-of-carrots-](http://www.pixnio.com/people/female-women/elderly-woman-in-kitchen-pictured-as-she-was-thoroughly-cleaning-a-number-of-carrots-and-radishes)

[and-radishes](http://www.pixnio.com/people/female-women/elderly-woman-in-kitchen-pictured-as-she-was-thoroughly-cleaning-a-number-of-carrots-and-radishes)). In the public domain.

Figure 2: From “Offred” (season 1, episode 1) [TV series episode], by R.

Morano (Director), *The Handmaid’s Tale*, 2017, Metro-Goldwyn-

Mayer and Hulu. Copyright 2020 by Hulu. Reprinted under fair

dealing.

Figure 3: From “Cameron Falls Landscape,” by A. Baldwin (Photographer),

2009, Flickr

(<https://www.flickr.com/photos/40371771@N08/3747854594>). CC

BY-SA 2.0.

Figure 4: From *The Perfect Blend* [archival webpage], by Raphcomics, n.d.,

(<https://raphcomic.com/comics/the-perfect-blend>). Copyright n.d. by

Raphcomics. Reprinted with permission.

Figure 5: Adapted from “Greek Y-DNA, ” by Hg J2-M172, 2020, Flickr

(<https://www.flickr.com/photos/j2-m172/49905629211/>). In the public

domain.

In this case, the webpage is named after the image itself.

This is the name of the website database.

This is the episode title.

This is the series title.

This is the production company.

We couldn't find anything like this in the APA Manual, so we combined audio-visual referencing with copyright statementing to bring you this cute little frankenreference.

If you're worried your reader will have trouble finding your image, notes like this can help.

Put 'n.d.' when there's no publication date.

Sometimes the creator names aren't names. Even if it's unusual, use whatever name the creator identifies as.

This is an accepted abbreviation of a commonly used copyright agreement. If you're unsure, it's best to write out the whole title of the licence.

We contacted this artist to ask if we could use their work. They had a few questions but kindly gave permission. Thanks Raph!

References

American Psychological Association. (2020). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.). <https://doi.org/10.1037.0000165-000>

Lethbridge College. (2019). *Copyright policy*. <https://lethbridgecollege.ca/document-centre/policies-and-procedures/college-wide-policies-and-procedures/copyright-policy>