



# Modifying Open Textbooks

Modifying or adapting open textbooks is a smart way to ensure that the resource meets your unique needs.

Some general consideration before adapting a textbook include:

- Choose tools that output to flexible formats such as ePub, PDF and HTML.
- Don't change more than is necessary. A textbook can be modified, incrementally, over time.

## First Things First

- Check the textbook's license to ensure you have the permission to adapt the resource. If the resource has a No Derivatives clause, then it is best to avoid making modifications.
- Be sure you have the textbook in a technical format that you are comfortable working with, such as the original source files (HTML, Word, Text, ePub, etc.).
- Many textbooks are in PDF format, which is not conducive to editing. To edit a PDF, it must first be converted to an editable format.

## Editing

- Tools to consider when editing textbooks include:

**PressBooks:** A web-based authoring tool that allows users to import a number of different formats — such as ePub, HTML and Word — and output the textbook as an ePub, PDF or mobile-friendly website.

Other tools include: **Microsoft Word, OpenOffice, ePub, Google Docs, ScribeTex, TeXworks, Texmaker, MediaWiki,** and **Dreamweaver.**

- Students like flexibility when it comes to their textbooks. Some may prefer printed versions of the textbook, others will prefer using a website. Still others will like to use an e-reader or e-reading software.

## Licensing Considerations

- After making your modifications, your textbook should use the same type of Creative Commons license as the original textbook so that it is compliant with the original terms of use.

## Sharing

- Try making your textbook available in multiple formats so students can choose the format that's right for them: ideally, something that can be viewed as a website, or on an e-reader or — as with a PDF — printed.
- After modifying a textbook, it needs to be hosted somewhere so that it can be accessed. For example, if your textbook was created using **PressBooks** and you are part of the BCcampus open textbook project then your textbook can be hosted on the [open.bccampus.ca](http://open.bccampus.ca) website.