



Frequently Asked Questions

This document was written with regards to addons and mods for games made by Bohemia Interactive Studios and so some conditions and limitations are specific to those products and services.

A respectful attitude towards others will be rewarded in kind. A reasonably voiced permission request is often all that is needed to convince an addonmaker to agree to the request. Communicating in mutual respect is the key to successful cooperation, recognizing each other's added value to the community.

Ownership of & permission for ArmA addons & mods

Always read the read-me and (if present) the license file. These may contain information on what sort of use the author will allow for his addons, whether or not permission is required for the use, contact details etc.

What is an addonmaker?

"Addonmaker" is a very broad term to describe everyone that creates additions that require the original game to function. This can be -but is not restricted to- modelers, texture artists, scripters, mission makers etc. A "mod" is a larger project but essentially the creators are still addonmakers.

Does an addonmaker own the work he has done?

Yes he does. All parts of an addon or mod that were created by an addonmaker are considered their property, regardless if it's artwork, code, scripting, sounds, a mission created in the editor

etc. All parts of an addon that the addonmaker himself made is his own property and it is their decision how they want the content to be used. An addon or mod that is released to the public remains the sole property of the creator(s) and anyone using it is subject to the terms of use as defined by the creator(s). All addons are distributed as freeware, but freeware is not the same as open source. Freeware means that the package may be distributed freely, the BIS EULA adds the condition that this must be done free of any sort of payment, but may not be edited freely. All addons are freeware unless the creator(s) states otherwise.

I have edited someone else's addon or BIS' work. Is the work I put into the addon legally mine?

Yes it is. All parts edited are now co-authored by the original creator and the person that edited it. Everything newly added that you created yourself is of course yours entirely. In case you edited BIS' work you own all of the changes you made but the EULA (End User License Agreement) that comes with the sample models determines that for all addons based on those models the files that includes your edits must be made available to everyone in a format that can be opened with BIS' own tools.

Someone else wants to edit my addon, but my addon is itself an edit from someone's earlier work. Who needs to give permission for the addon to be edited?

Both the original creator as well as all those that edited the addon before need to be asked for and must all give their permission for the intended use. If anyone objects then the content cannot be used. The source of the original work is irrelevant in this matter, it can be from another game, another addon or from the internet. All works are protected by copyright, and all authors are able to place restrictions on it's usage.

I want to use content from another game, what additional things do I have to take into account?

As with addons for BIS games there are two types of sources for content from other games. It firstly depends on whether the content was made by the game's original developer or by an external party. Content from a professional developer represents a financial investment and the developer or publisher may take legal action to protect that investment. The other possibility is that the content was made by a fellow addonmaker. Regardless of the source, permission must be obtained at all times just as it is for content made for BIS games except if the author has stated otherwise in his license.

I am having trouble contacting someone to ask them for permission.

Besides the obvious ways like e-mail and sending someone a personal message if they happen to be registered on community forums you can also try asking around on community sites. There's a good chance that someone who knows the person you're trying to contact reads your message. If the author is in a squad you can ask them if they know how to get in touch. Please note that requesting permission from an author but never hearing back from them but continuing with the editing anyway is not legally nor morally valid. Addonmakers may add a clause in their license that does give permission if they are not able to be contacted however so always read

the read-me and/or license agreement.

Someone refused me permission to edit their addon ... what reasons could they have to do that?

There are many reasons why permission can be denied. Often the author will explain why. Some example reasons can be that the ideas aren't appealing for the author, that he has plans to create something similar himself, that he does not want people to report problems to him that are caused by work he did not do or it can be economical (the source files created in non-BIS tools being sold).

Permission was denied. What can I do now?

If the content you want to edit is common then you can be fairly sure that other people have worked on similar content. You could ask them for permission. All addonmakers have a different stance towards permission and availability of their addons for editing purposes so there is no real solution that works for everybody. If all else fails you could (learn to) create the content yourself. That way you'll not only learn new skills but will also feel the immense satisfaction that addonmakers enjoy when they've created something.

Unauthorized use and the need for making your opinion on what you consider authorized use known

What is unauthorized use?

"Unauthorized use" covers all ways that any content can be used other than playing with it the way it was made available by the original author, and additional authors if the addon is an edited version of another addon within the game that it was released for. Permission must be asked and given before any other use of the content is allowed. If no license file is present, nor a mention in the read-me about terms of use, then the most restricted type of license is automatically applied. No use of any kind other than using it ingame as intended by the original creator.

Can I sell addons or a mod that I made?

Selling addons or mods is not allowed unless you have acquired a license from BIS that says otherwise. All the content that is sold must be yours or you must compensate all those that share ownership of (parts of) the content. If no license is given by BIS than no money may be made from an addon or mod in any way. Restricting access to your addons unless a donation is made is not allowed either as BIS requires that all addons meant for anything other than personal use must be made publicly available free of charge.

Is editing an addon for personal use allowed?

By default editing and addon for personal or clan use is not allowed unless permission is given

by the author. Showing off personal edits in screenshots and/or videos with or without an intention to release the edited addon is also not allowed. The main reason why these activities are not allowed is likely because the author does not want people to have unrealistic expectations of their addons, does not want to see the quality of their addon decline, is not looking forward to receiving complaints about poorly functioning addons that they did not release etc. Posting screenshots and/or videos is seen as taking credit for someone else's work, especially if the source of the content is not mentioned.

Someone has made an edited version of my addon/mod without getting permission from me. What can I do?

Firstly you should contact the site admin or forum moderators on which the content was posted. Explain what has happened. Give details like if you have been asked for permission at all or if you've denied it, what exactly has been edited etc. If they agree with you any downloads will be disabled and the author will be contacted about the breach of your rights. From that point on it is up to you whether you discuss possible permission or deny it.

My work has been ported to another game without my permission

Regardless of whether or not you gave someone permission for the editing of your addons for the game you intended it for does not give them permission to port it to any other game. In that case permission needs to be granted by the original author and all those that worked on it since. This is irrelevant of a similarity in game engines but depends on the way they are marketed as distinct products. For example making addons from ArmA2 available in the DayZ mod without any editing being required is allowed but the original author is (as always) not responsible for any bugs that may occur from such usage. Use of the same addon in the standalone DayZ game without permission is not permitted since it is a separate product. Porting from ArmA2 to ArmA3 is restricted because of the same reason despite the similarities. If the addon contains edited content from BIS that would mean violating the rights of both BIS and the addon's author.

Why is it important to include a license?

A license allows everyone to easily and clearly determine how you want your intellectual property treated and what they can and cannot do with it. Even if there is no license included the content is still protected by law, but it does not allow you to set specific terms that are more relaxed than the strictest form that is applied by default when no license is present. So including a license makes life easier for everyone, author, addonmakers and players alike.

What kind of licenses are there and how do I add one to my releases?

Licenses can range all the way from restricted to only allowing use in the specific game it was made for to non-commercial open source and everything in between. The most common wishes of addonmakers since 2001 (Operation Flashpoint, the base on which ArmA and DayZ are built) has been that permission needs to be asked and granted and that credit needs to be given. Another popular variant is that permission is not required but credit does need to be given. There are ready-to-use licenses available on the internet. One good example are the Creative Commons licenses. These are meant for non-commercial products and allow the author to

select a license form that best suits their wishes. You can include it in the read-me file or you can make a separate license file. <http://creativecommons.org/about/licenses/>

How do licenses that BIS distributes with their games and tools affect my license?

As the license that comes with the BIS tools clearly states any content that has been added to, changed, converted or edited any other way with the use of a tool from BIS is restricted from there on to BIS' own games. The source files that were made in other programs like Blender, Photoshop, Gimp etc may still be used for every purpose you can think of. The license that comes with tools and content from BIS does not in any way take ownership of your work away from you but it may impose some restrictions on it's use and your ability to keep the distribution of your work under control such as for example the license you agree to when using the sample ArmA2 models.

Distribution mirroring & package integrity

I run a community site or game server that offers mirrors for addons and mods. What do I need to pay attention to?

First of all thank you for supporting the community by volunteering your time and resources! There are two main issues to consider. First of these is that the downloading of files must be free of charge and open to everyone. Of course you may require registration before allowing a visitor to download anything but this too must be free of charge. You may ask for donations to help keep the site and/or game server affordable, but this must not in any way restrict the functionality of the site such as access to files and download speeds.

Secondly all files that are available for download may not be repackaged, added to, removed from or edited in any other way. They must remain as the authors intended.

Please support and respect BIS and all genuine addonmakers, without them there would be nothing to play with.

