

Risus: The Anything RPG License Information

Risus is more than just a free, beer-and-pretzels joke RPG. It's a free, beer-and-pretzels joke RPG with a large and (I'm happy to say) fairly huggy family of online fans, including fans with an itch to write new **Risus** stuff. This is a good thing, and I do my best to keep the rules for fan-material as simple as **Risus** itself. Drop me a line if any of this stuff is unclear, or if you're just bored and want to drop me a line!

Rules for Free Fan-Supplements and Articles

Just about any normal kind of fan-work falls into this category: documents providing all-new stuff for **Risus** ... house rules, adventures, settings, character archives and so on. A **Risus** supplement assumes that the reader has access to a copy of **Risus** itself (because, of course, the reader does). It refers to **Risus** (and, possibly, to commercial **Risus** titles like the **Companion**), but it includes no text from any Cumberland title. Any **Risus** supplement must meet the following conditions:

- ❖ All versions and iterations of the work must be absolutely free, distributed without any charge or financial obligation, regardless of form or format, electronic, physical or otherwise.
- ❖ It must prominently mention **Risus: The Anything RPG**, and must (with similar prominence) include a hyperlink to the **Risus** homepage.
- ❖ It must refer to me by name (S. John Ross) as the author of **Risus**.

Those are the bare-bones absolutes. There are, obviously, a lot of courtesy-type things that would be *nice*, but that aren't *requirements*. I'm still comfortable leaving those up to individual choice. Do what you can, please, to help keep things simple by *voluntarily engaging in common-sense courtesy when possible*. It would be a terrible irony if a four-page game required some kind of dense usage license.

The Use of the IOR Crest

Any IOR member may display the IOR crest as part of any **Risus** work, without special notice or other conditions. See the IOR Charter. Non-IOR members may not make use of the crest in any way.

The Use of **Risus** Artwork (Stick Figures, Etc.)

Feel free to re-publish any **Risus**-specific illustrations which I've made available in *freeware* form (including the illustrations in **Risus** itself, and any "LCB" artwork I've released in font form). Please remember to credit me for them, however (this is a separate concern from crediting me as the author of **Risus**), and include both explicit copyright notice (appropriate to the year of their publication; see the source font or document for the year(s) to use) and explicit notice that the art is used by permission. Copyright should always be explicitly by "S. John Ross," rather than "Cumberland Games & Diversions."

Recast **Risus**

I make allowances for a special kind of **Risus** fan-document I call a "recast." This is the original **Risus: The Anything RPG** (or any recognizable chunks of it) re-written to *narrow its focus to a specific setting or genre*. **Uresius: Grave of Anything** is an example of a recast of my own devising. Recasts follow all the standard rules for fan supplements (see above), with the following additions:

- ❖ Since any recast is a repost of my original work with your original genre and/or setting additions, we share authorship, and this must be noted explicitly in the byline and credits.
- ❖ You must explicitly note that the portions of the game taken from the original **Risus** are my copyrighted material.
- ❖ Only **Risus** itself may be recast, not the **Companion**, **Ring of Thieves** or other titles. If you quote any text from the original **Risus** game, the rules for "Recast **Risus**" apply.

- ❖ It bears repeating that, to qualify as a "recast," your work must emphasize *specific setting and/or specific genre material*. If your contributions are entirely game-mechanical (variant or expanded rules), you must present them as a supplement (see above) using only your own words.

In general, I think supplements are the best way to go. Whenever it's reasonable, please make a supplement instead of a recast.

Risus Mirrors

If you like **Risus**, please link to it *rather* than mirroring the archive. Links strengthen the site's position in search engines so that new gamers who stumble on it are (A) stumbling onto the most current version and (B) stumbling onto the hub of the thing, where they can find the accompanying freebies, related commercial stuff, foreign translations, and current links to the game's community centers.

That said, mirroring is certainly permitted. You may, if you wish, host and distribute copies of the complete ZIP archive containing the PDF and other versions, but please do your best to keep it current, *do not modify it (or its contents) in any way*, provide a link back to the **Risus** homepage, and let me know you've posted it so I can include you on the downloads page.

The archive must always be distributed 100% free of charge, whether distributed via file-transfer, physically on a disc or drive, etc. It may never be included as part of any file library or package which is sold, for any reason, at any price, for any excuse.

Remember ...

Individual documents have a way of traveling individually from their source, so please remember to apply these rules to every article/page on your site, if the muse tickles you to engage in frequent **Risus**ery! This is quadruply important for Word documents, PDF files, and other files that folks are more likely to download than just read in a browser.

If You Happen to Notice ...

If you spot a **Risus** fan-page online that doesn't conform to these rules ... remember that 90% of the time (give or take a percent) it's just an honest oversight. The spirit of these rules is far more important than the letter. It's not that big a deal, so if you decide to email them (or me) about it, keep it gentle and assume the best.

The Last Rule for Fan-Freebies

The only other "rule" is: write me and let me know you've done it, whatever "it" may be! And post an announcement to the **Risus Mailing List**, while you're at it!

Licensing **Risus** For Commercial Projects

Risus licensing contracts (to legally produce adventures, worldbooks, spinoff games, swag ... *anything* someone would have to pay for, or anything which would serve a *promotional* role for any entity engaged in commerce) are available to commercial publishers. I've done a few such licenses over the years ... and I've *turned down* requests for several others. I'm picky. I want **Risus** gamers to be comfortable assuming that a **Risus** logo on a commercial item amounts to an *endorsement of reasonable quality*, not just something someone paid for. Quality always trumps profit concern. No exceptions at Cumberland, and no exceptions *permitted* among Cumberland licensees.

Risus licenses *aren't* free and *aren't* "open," but they're silly-inexpensive and generous in many ways, and they are *negotiable* (never boilerplate). Your coin of negotiation is your established track-record for excellence. If you're seriously thinking of publishing some commercial **Risus** material of any kind, drop me a line and remind me of the times your work *rocked my gaming table*. We'll take it from there.