DAY 37 · Part 4 · What to Watch Out For

Why did the meaning of "copying" get shaky? — Copyright

Five-Minute AI Lessons · Oct 13, 2026

We used to look only at the result, but now we ask what it learned from, too.

In a nutshell

1. Before AI, "copying" was judged by **how much the result looked like the original**. You just put the two side by side.

2. After AI, one more question got added — is it OK that it **learned from other people's work before making anything**? Now there are fights even when the results don't look alike.

3. This still has **different answers in different countries, and big court cases are still going on**. So don't memorize "this is illegal" — it's better to know what the issue actually is.

In one picture

Judging only the result vs judging what it learned from too

Before AI

· Put two side by side: do they match?
· Get permission before using
· Clear standards from past rulings

→

After AI

· People argue even if results differ
· What it learned from becomes the issue
· Varies by country; cases still ongoing

The standard on the left didn't disappear. Results that look alike are still a problem, just like before. There's simply a new box on the right.

Key idea: on top of the result, "what did it learn from?" became a new issue

Experiment · Before & after

What changed before and after AI?

What gets compared

Before

You put two pictures or two pieces of writing side by side and saw whether they looked alike. H...

After

People argue even when the results don't look alike, because a new question got added: what did...

Now people argue about a step you can't see. That's exactly why it got hard.

Who asks permission

Before

If you wanted to use something, you asked first. Even putting one poem in a textbook meant gett...

After

One side says there's far too much training data to ask permission piece by piece; the other sa...

Europe says that if rights holders mark their work "don't use for training" in...

Is there an answer ye...

Before

When disputes came up, courts decided, and thanks to a long pile of past rulings, the standard...

After

The US, Europe, Japan and South Korea are each moving in different directions, and the big cour...

So what to take away today isn't the right answer — it's the issue. If you hear...

Switch the same question between "Before AI" and "After AI." The rules didn't disappear — there's just one more...

Try it yourself in the web lesson · next-token.net/en/learn/day-37/

Quick check

Just three questions

Q1

Before AI, how was "copying" judged?

① How much the results looked alike
② Who was more famous
③ Who posted first
④ How expensive it was

Q2

What question got added after AI?

① How many pictures it drew
② What it learned from before making it
③ How many colors it used
④ How many seconds it took

Q3

Where do fights over training data stand now?

① Ruled all illegal
② Ruled all legal
③ Varies by country; ongoing
④ Nobody's fighting

Know the why, too

Q1

① People put two works side by side and looked at how similar they were. It was a standard you could check by eye.

Q2

② Even when the results don't look alike, people argue over whether it's OK to have learned from other people's work. That's the training data debate.

Q3

③ Europe, Japan, the US and South Korea are moving differently, and the big court cases aren't over. Instead of memorizing an answer, know what the issue is.

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but now we ask what it learned from, too.

Tomorrow: Deepfakes — how to use clues to spot faces and voices that look real.