



COPYRIGHT FAQs

What is copyright?

Copyright provides creators of original literary, dramatic, musical and artistic works, published editions of works, sound recordings, films and broadcasts with a bundle of rights to control the use of those works.

How long does copyright last?

The length of copyright protection depends upon the type of work. In the case of literary, dramatic, musical or artistic works, the period of copyright protection lasts until 70 years after the death of the author. In the case of films, copyright lasts for 70 years after the death of the last survivor of the principal director, the authors of the screenplay and dialogue, or the composer of any music specially created for the film.

In the case of sound recordings, broadcasts and cable programmes, the period of copyright protection is 50 years, and in the case of published editions and commercially exploited artistic works, the period of copyright protection is 25 years.

Does copyright need to be registered?

In the UK copyright arises automatically and there is no requirement for registration. The copyright arises upon the creation of the work in fixed form. Some countries, such as the USA, do have copyright registries. The ACID IP Databank is useful for those who wish to record details of their copyright works. For example, 2D drawings, plans, artwork, responses to tender and other copyright work. The ACID IP Databank continues to grow and provides secure and uniquely numbered reassurance to brand owners that their IP is held in a secure portal endorsed by the Police Intellectual Property Crime Unit. It does not add to rights but provides independent proof of the date a lodgement is uploaded. All uploads have a secure, tamperproof and unique number.

Who owns the copyright?

As a general rule, the first owner of a copyright in a literary, dramatic musical or artistic work is the author. In relation to films, the principal director and film producer are joint authors and together first owners of the copyright. The copyright in sound recordings, broadcasts and typographic arrangements of published editions ordinarily belong to the record producer, broadcaster or publisher.

The main exception to this general rule is where a work is created by an employee in the course of his or her employment. In such a case, the employer is ordinarily owner of the copyright.



Is it possible to transfer a copyright?

It is possible to transfer by sale or otherwise all or any of the bundles of rights under copyright. Such a transfer can be limited in time so that the rights will revert to the original owner upon expiry of that period of time. It is also possible to limit the transfer to specific uses or applications of a copyright work. In addition, it is possible for a copyright owner to choose to licence others to use the work. In this case, ownership is not transferred; rather permission is given for use of the copyright.

If I own an article does that give me the copyright in that article?

The physical article which you own does not mean that you own the intangible copyright in the article. The copyright exists separately and independently from the article itself.

If I want to use or copy copyright material, how do I get permission?

Ordinarily, you should contact the copyright owner. In some instances there are bodies which act for groups of copyright owners that offer blanket licences to potential users. There are also limited instances in which permission is not required to use a copyright work, but it is wise to seek legal advice before relying on these.

Should I include a copyright notice on my work?

Technically, this is not a requirement under UK copyright law. However, by including the copyright symbol, "©", your name and the year of publication of the work, you will receive automatic copyright protection in certain foreign countries such as the USA, e.g. ©2011 ACID Limited.

What should I do if I find out that someone has used my copyright work without permission?

Where someone uses your work without your permission, they may be infringing your copyright. Courts can provide a number of solutions such as an injunction to prevent the other person from using your material, an award of compensation, and orders to hand over the infringing copies. However, before considering court proceedings you should seek legal advice. Mediation is a simple means of providing the means of alternative resolution but to be effective, both parties must agree to the process. ACID can provide details of their cost and time effective Mediate to Resolve Scheme which is timed and without lawyers.



Will I benefit from copyright protection abroad?

There are a number of international conventions which provide owners of UK copyrights with copyright protection abroad. The protection you will receive will be governed by the national law of the country in which you seek protection. Again, you should seek legal advice applicable to the relevant country

Have you signed the ACID IP Charter?

Join a growing number of people who are about IP ethics, respect, and compliance.
<https://www.acid.uk.com/become-a-charter-signatory/>

