

# Copyright: know your rights

**Copyright protects the intellectual and economic rights of creators.**

This includes literary, dramatic, artistic and musical works expressed in all media, from printed books to websites.

As soon as you record an idea, for example by writing down the outline of a story, it is protected by copyright. Copyright is designed to ensure that works may not be used or reproduced without permission of the copyright holder, allowing creators to profit from their creations. As long as the work is original, copyright protection is automatic.

Copyright ownership usually belongs to the author/creator of a work. But copyright can also be assigned or licensed. For example an author may grant a publisher the exclusive right to distribute their work. Copyright in works created during employment usually resides with the employer, unless the employee's contract states otherwise.

## How do I register my copyright?

There is no formal system in the UK for registering copyright because it arises automatically. Though not a requirement, the use of the copyright symbol ©, followed by the name of the copyright owner and the year in which the work was first published is the most common practice.

To show that a written work existed by a set date, a copy of the work can be lodged with a reliable third party such as a bank or a solicitor.



## Are there any exceptions to copyright?

The Copyright, Designs and Patents Act does provide certain exceptions to copyright. 'Fair dealing' for example applies to copying works for the purposes of non-commercial research or private study, criticism or review and news reporting. Copyright owners have exclusive rights in their work. These include the rights:

- to copy a work
- to issue copies of the work to the public (including by rental or lending)
- to perform, show or play the work in public
- to broadcast the work or make it available online
- to adapt the work or do any of the above in relation to the adaptation

For more information please visit [www.alcs.co.uk](http://www.alcs.co.uk) or call + 44 (0)20 7264 5700. ALCS is dedicated to protecting and promoting authors' rights.

## Don't forget:

If you are a creator you will want to protect your creations and get paid for them so that you can afford to carry on creating.

## Would you work for nothing?

If you are a lover of creative works you will want to support creators. Do the right thing and purchase TV series, films and books from a source which makes sure the creator gets paid so they can keep on creating and give you the choice of more great material to enjoy.