

A BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO COPYRIGHT

Updated May 2017



Intellectual Property consists of three types which you register

- **Patents** - How something works or the method of making it.
- **Designs** – Protects the overall visual appearance of a product or a part of a product
- **Trade Marks** – The sign by which you distinguish your goods or services from those of your competitors.

and two which you don't

- **Copyright** - Artistic or literary expression.
- **Know How** - Valuable information not readily available to the public. Highly confidential Know How is known as a **Trade Secret** and should be protected by legal agreements.

What is copyright?

Copyright is protection for literary or artistic authorship. Copyright does not protect ideas for works. It is only when the work has been captured (fixed) in hard copy that it is protected. For example an idea for a book cannot be protected, but once you have written the manuscript then copyright applies.

What does copyright protect?

- Books, novels, technical reports, manuals
- Paintings, sculptures, photographs
- Music, songs, plays, dramatic works
- Films, videos, television and radio broadcasts
- Engineering, technical or architectural plans
- Promotional literature, advertising
- Computer software, databases

Copyright - an automatic Right

Copyright does not need to be registered and rights are therefore instant and free. Whether you have taken a photograph, written a new bestseller, composed a song, so long as the work is an original work that qualifies for copyright protection - that is, it falls into one of the categories of material protected by copyright, you will automatically have copyright protection without having to do anything to establish this.

Protecting your work

- The copyright symbol © can be used to indicate a claim to copyright. It may help protect your work if you mark it with the © symbol, your name, and the year in which it was created.
- Deposit your work with a solicitor or a bank. There may be an annual fee charged for this service.
- Send the originals to yourself by registered mail or special delivery signing your name across the sealed opening of the package before you post it. Keep the package

unopened once you receive it, but do remember to write a list of the contents on the envelope when you do get it back so you don't open it later by accident!

Exceptions to copyright

Copyright law relating to 'Exceptions to Copyright' has recently changed and you would be advised to read the IPO UK leaflet 'Exceptions to Copyright: An overview' available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/changes-to-copyright-law>

There are a number of exceptions to copyright that allow limited use of copyright works without the permission of the copyright owner. These include;

- Personal Copies for Private Use
- Caricature, Parody or Pastiche
- Quotation
- Research and Private Study
- Text and Data-Mining
- Education and Teaching
- Archiving and Preservation
- Public Administration
- Accessible formats for disabled people

Hints and tips

- Keep good records of everything you do relating to your idea.
- If you work on a computer then download a second copy of your records on to a separate hard drive just in case your computer fails.
- If you keep written records buy yourself a hard bound stitched together notebook in which to write your notes etc. Number every page and date every entry you make crossing nothing out. If you make a mistake or change your mind about something you have recorded simply cross it through leaving it still legible. This creates a record of the path you have taken from the initial spark of the idea through to the finished item and can be useful in helping to prove copyright.

Further Information

The Business & IP Centre Hull

The Business & IP Centre has extensive collections of business and Intellectual property information, plus databases. Manuals on Intellectual Property and Intellectual Property law are on the open access shelves.

Contact details:

Business & IP Centre Hull

Central Library

Albion Street

Hull

HU1 3TF

T +44 (0)1482 223 344

E reference.library@hcandl.co.uk

www.hcandl.co.uk/BIPCHull

 @BIPCHull

Workshops

The Business & IP Centre runs regular workshops on intellectual property and business. Contact us for the current programme.

The Intellectual Property Office

The IPO UK is the official government body responsible for granting intellectual property rights in the United Kingdom. The website of the IPO UK contains a vast amount of information on all forms of intellectual property including what the different types of intellectual property protect, how to apply for the various intellectual property rights and the necessary forms and lists of relevant fees.

Contact details:

T +44 (0)300 300 2000 (Local rate number)

E information@ipo.gov.uk

www.ipo.gov.uk/

Chartered Institute of Patent Attorneys

The Chartered Institute of Patent Attorneys holds regular Clinics at a number of sites around the UK to provide free basic advice to unrepresented innovators who are at the early stages of developing an idea. The Clinics are all given by a Registered Patent Attorney who is a Fellow of the Institute see www.cipa.org.uk/pages/advice-clinics

Contact details:

The Chartered Institute of Patent Attorneys

T +44 (0)20 7405 9450

E mail@cipa.org.uk

www.cipa.org.uk

Institute of Trade Mark Attorneys

Free advice clinics can be booked using the application for form downloadable via the ITMA website at www.itma.org.uk/trademarks/clinics

Contact details:

ITMA Office

T +44 (0)20 7101 6090

E tm@itma.org.uk

www.itma.org.uk

Images by [Casey Fleser](#) [Ron Curtis](#) [Liz West](#) under a [Creative Commons license](#)



Supported by

