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Further Tips On Protecting Your Work

This fact sheet is intended for clients who have registered work withCopyright Witness. It describes points of interest and further action that may be of additional benefit to protect copyright work.

1. **Introduction**

   Now that your work is registered with Copyright Witness, it will benefit from the excellent independent date and content proof that our registration provides.

   This means that in the event of any infringement of your rights, you have access to the very best evidence to support your claim.

   You should however take time to review the following information as it may reveal additional points to check, or steps you can take, that will help to protect your work and a deter would-be infringer from stealing your work.

2. **Maximising protection**

   To ensure maximum protection we advise all our clients to:

   i. Mark all work with a copyright notice.
   ii. Include a notice that the work is registered with Copyright Witness.
   iii. Keep or register supporting evidence and updates.

3. **Copyright notices**

   The copyright notice states that copyright applies to the work, and prevents an infringer claiming that they were not aware that copyright existed on the work.

   At least one copyright notice should appear on your work, though if the work is in many parts, it is best to mark each part separately; in some instances, (e.g. web sites), the notice may even appear on every page. If the work has a separate cover, then you should mark the body of the work as well as the cover or sleeve.

   For electronic images it is often not appropriate to place a notice directly onto the visible image, in which case you should ensure that the properties of the file state that the work is copyright. For most image editors, this can be accessed via the File menu, Properties option.

   The copyright notice should take the form of:

   i. The actual term 'copyright'.
   ii. The copyright symbol '©'.
   iii. The year.
   Normally when first published, but for unpublished work, use the year it was written.
   iv. The name of the copyright owner.
   This can be an individual, collective or organisation.
   e.g. Copyright © 2026 Joe Smith.
   v. For sound recordings you should also include a phonogram copyright notice for the sound recording itself, using the '℗' symbol to denote the copyright of the sound recording.
   e.g. Copyright © 2026 Joe Smith/℗ 2026 Joe Smith

   Tip: On most computers the ℗ symbol can be found within the Webdings font.

4. **Extending your copyright notice**

   You may also include a statement after the notice. This should state the terms under which the work may be used and provide information relating to what you regard as a breach of your rights.

   The standard recommended statement for most work is 'All Rights Reserved'. It simply means that you are not willing to release any rights to the work except any that are explicitly described in law, (some educational or reporting use is normally allowed without permission).

   There are occasionally circumstances where it may be advantageous to allowing some limited actions that would normally be considered a breach of rights. If you wish to allow certain acts in relation to your work, your statement should be worded appropriately to clearly state what is acceptable and what is not permitted. For more information, please see our fact sheet P-03 "Using copyright notices".

5. **Notice of registration**

   Displaying a notice that the work is registered with Copyright Witness is a deterrent against infringement, by displaying the notice, you demonstrate that you are aware of your rights, that you take copyright seriously, and that you have very strong evidence with which to pursue a case if your work is infringed.

   The notice would normally appear next to or below the copyright notice and state. "This work is registered with the Copyright Witness." You may also include your registration number if you wish.

   The complete wording now reads:

   Copyright © 2026 Joe Smith. All rights reserved.
   This work is registered with Copyright Witness:
   Reg. No:123456789

   Registered images for your work can also be obtained from our web site at copyrightwitness.com/images.

6. **Registering updates to your work**

   Updates to your work can be made either using the on-line update facility at our website, or via from F-08. This enables you to include any new content in the registration, whilst still retaining the original registration date, and evidence of the original content of your work. Updates are linked with your existing registration, and protected from the date we process the application.

   Please note that updates are only used to add or update files in an existing registration. Use form F-01 for new registrations.

   Examples of use:

   i. If your work is not complete at the time of registration:
      a. For example a synopsis may evolve into a manuscript which may in turn need several re-writes. Updates may be used to provide protection for new versions of the work without the need for a new registration.
      b. If you are a photographer, or greetings card designer you may need to add items to a particular range or series.

   ii. If the work is continually evolving:
      a. For example a web site may be continually updated. In this example it would be appropriate to register timely updates whenever there has been a significant change to the site, or whenever you publish new content which you believe may have commercial value.
      b. Periodicals and magazines: Each edition will typically contain new content that may be registered as an update.

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7. **Supporting evidence**

   Supporting evidence falls into two categories:

   i. **Evolution of ideas**

   This is defined as evidence that the work progressed over a period of time, rather than being copied from elsewhere, and normally takes the form of development work such as: Background research, draft versions, rough sketches, first recordings etc.

   Development work can also be submitted for registration, this means that you can have the same level of evidence to demonstrate evolution of ideas as you do for your other registrations, and also have the assurance that if you lose or discard your original development work, Copyright Witness can provide a duplicate if it is ever required.

   Further evolution of the work may be registered using the on-line update facility or form F-08 as discussed previously.

   ii. **Footprints or watermarking**

   You can also insert supporting evidence into finished documents. Footprints are deliberate mistakes or hidden elements that will be known only to you. A typical example would be the software designer who includes redundant subroutines that identify the author in some way. Watermarks are algorithms embedded inside a file which can be read by special readers, they are particularly relevant to image files.

8. **Appendix- Key to available Copyright Witness forms**

   - F-01: Copyright registration application.
     Used to register work with Copyright Witness
   - F-04: Transfer of registration.
     Used in the event of a change of copyright ownership to transfer a registration to the new copyright owner.
   - F-05: Duplicate work request.
     Used to request copies of your work.
   - F-08: Application to update an existing registration.
     Used to add new or updated files to an existing Copyright Witness registration.
   - F-09: Registration renewal form.
     Used to extend the registration period. This form is sent automatically near the end of the registration period.
   - F-11: Combined certificate and registered notice label order form.

9. **Common questions**

What if my work changes, do I need to register it again?

Updates may be made to your existing registration, the earlier section 'Registering updates to your work' explains this.

This is recommended where the work has significantly changed, or if you feel there is some sensitive nature, or commercial value, to the updated work that requires additional safeguarding.

Can I register development work before I have a finished product?

Yes, this would be an occasion where a registration update should be considered for the finished product.

From the proof of copyright standpoint this is the ideal way to proceed, and we will accept multiple updates for the same work.

We always recommend that work is registered before it is seen by any third party.

What if I need to pursue an infringement case?

We can be called on to provide evidence to support any claim or case you make. This will typically take the form of providing copies of your work and confirmation of registration dates to validate your claim.

If you believe that your work has been infringed you would normally pursue your case with the guidance of your solicitor.

Our fact sheet P-05 "Copyright Infringement" is also available, and explains the procedure to follow.

How can I extend the registration period?

When your current registration period nears its end, we will automatically contact you with the option to extend the registration period for a further 5 or 10 year period.

To ensure that our records are up to date, you should notify us of any change of address or other contact details. You can notify us either via our web site, or by post to or Registration Services department quoting your account number.

What if I sell or transfer my work?

The new owner of the work is likely to also want to transfer the registration. To arrange this you need to complete Form F-04: Transfer of copyright registration. This form is available on request from our Registration Services department, and also via our web site.

Do I need to register my work in other countries?

As copyright is an automatic international right, with 149 states signed up to the Berne Convention world-wide and 181 signatories of WIPO/Paris/Berne Conventions, there is normally no need to make further applications.

The purpose of the registration is to provide independent verification of your work; additional registrations would merely duplicate the same information, and provide no additional cover.

The only exception to this would be for work by US citizens, who in order to file a claim in a US court, are required to register with the US Copyright Office (part of the Library of Congress). This rule only affects US citizens.

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