

Copyright For Kids

What is Copyright?

Copyright means the permission to copy. Copyright lets authors, musicians, and artists make money off of their artistic creations for a limited amount of time. It begins automatically the second you have put a word on paper or saved a document on your computer. It also makes sure that creators are paid for the use of their work and stops people from modifying the work without the owner's permission. If we didn't have copyrights people would not be paid or rewarded for the creative works they produce. If people couldn't make some sort of living through the arts and their creations there would be a lot less desire to be artistic in the first place. If authors couldn't make a living writing a lot of people would not write. Simply put, without copyright there would be less artistic and creative content produced in the world.

What Can Be Copyrighted?

Written works, musical works, dramatic works, choreographic works, sculptural works, movies, sound recordings, architectural works, pictures, drawings and other graphic works can all be copyrighted.

How Long Does Copyright Last?

- If a work was created between 1978-present: The copyright will last for the span of the person's life plus 70 years.
- If a work was created between 1923-1978: The copyright is protected for 95 years.

What is the Public Domain?

In terms of art, everything created eventually ends up in the public domain. Once a copyright has run out it is considered public domain and can be used by anyone in whatever way they would like to use it. It is basically considered public property and no one then owns it. Everything published before 1923 is in the public domain. Authors can choose to put works directly in the public domain by including a notice that the item is in the public domain or creative commons.

What is Fair Use?

There are some exceptions to the rules of copyright. Fair use is the use of copyright protected material for the purpose of teaching, comment, news, reporting, criticism, and research. It allows the limited use of copyrighted materials without having to pay for use or ask permission for use

Examples:

- You can use excerpts from a book to write a review of it. However, you can't reproduce whole chapters of the book for reviewing purposes without permission.
- A class dealing with film studies can screen a movie without payment for study purposes. However, no admission can be charged and only students in the class can attend the screening.