



How has copyright kept up with advances in technology?

The field of copyright and related rights has expanded enormously with the technological progress of the last several decades, which has brought new ways of spreading creations by such forms of world-

wide communication as satellite broadcast and compact discs. Dissemination of works via the Internet is but the latest development which raises new questions concerning copyright. WIPO is deeply involved in the ongoing international debate to shape new standards for copyright protection in cyberspace. The Organization administers the WIPO Copyright Treaty and the WIPO Performances and Phonogram Treaty (often known together as the "Internet Treaties"), which set down international norms aimed at preventing unauthorized access to and use of creative works on the Internet or other digital networks.

How is copyright regulated?

Copyright itself does not depend on official procedures. A created work is considered protected by copyright as soon as it exists. However, many countries have a national copyright office and some laws allow for registration of works for the purposes of, for example, identifying and distinguishing titles of works.

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Many owners of creative works do not have the means to pursue the legal and administrative enforcement of copyright, especially given the increasingly worldwide use of literary, musical and performance rights. As a result, the establishment of collective management organizations or societies is a growing trend in many countries. These societies can provide members the benefits of the organization's administrative and legal expertise in, for example, collecting, managing, and disbursing royalties gained from international use of a member's work.

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What is copyright?

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What is copyright?

Copyright is a legal term describing rights given to creators for their literary and artistic works.

What is covered by copyright?

The kinds of works covered by copyright include: literary works such as novels, poems, plays, reference works, newspapers, and computer programs; databases; films, musical compositions, and choreography; artistic works such as paintings, drawings, photographs, and sculpture; architecture; and advertisements, maps, and technical drawings.



What rights does copyright provide?

The original creators of works protected by copyright, and

their heirs, have certain basic rights. They hold the **exclusive right** to use or authorize others to use the work on agreed terms. The creator of a work can prohibit or authorize:

- its **reproduction** in various forms, such as printed publication or sound recording;
- its **public performance**, as in a play or musical work;
- **recordings** of it, for example, in the form of compact discs, cassettes, or videotapes;

Photos: TIB



- its **broadcasting**, by radio, cable, or satellite;
- its **translation** into other languages, or its **adaptation**, such as a novel into a screenplay.

Many creative works protected by copyright require mass distribution, communication, and financial investment for their dissemination (for example, publications, sound recordings, and films); hence, creators often **sell the rights** to their works to individuals or companies best able to market the works in return for payment. These payments are often made dependent on the actual use of the work, and are then referred to as **royalties**.

These **economic rights** have a time limit, according to the relevant WIPO treaties, of 50 years after the creator's death. National law may establish longer time-limits. This limit enables both creators and their heirs to benefit financially for a reasonable period of time. Copyright protection also includes **moral rights**, which involve the right to claim authorship of a work, and the right to oppose changes to it that could harm the creator's reputation.

The **creator** – or the **owner of the copyright** in a work – can **enforce rights** administratively and in the courts, by inspection of premises for evidence of production or possession of illegally made – “**pirated**” – goods related to protected works. The owner may obtain court orders to stop such activities, as well as seek damages for loss of financial rewards and recognition.

What are rights related to copyright?

A field of **rights related to copyright** has rapidly developed over the last 50 years. These related rights grew up **around** copyrighted works, and provide similar, although often more limited and of shorter duration, rights to:

- **performing artists** (such as actors and musicians) in their performances;
- **producers of sound recordings** (for example, cassette recordings and compact discs) in their recordings;
- **broadcasting organizations** in their radio and television programs.

Why protect copyright?

Copyright and its related rights are essential to **human creativity**, by giving creators incentives in the form of **recognition and fair economic rewards**.

Under this system of rights, creators are assured that their works can be disseminated without fear of unauthorized copying or piracy. This in turn helps increase access to and enhances the enjoyment of culture, knowledge, and entertainment all over the world.

