

Copyright Basics

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Works of authorship include the following categories:

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- Musical works, including any accompanying words
- Dramatic works, including any accompanying music
- Pantomimes and choreographic works
- Pictorial, graphic, and sculptural works
- Motion Pictures and other Audiovisual Works
- Sound Recordings
- Architectural Works

Works that may not be copyrighted

Copyright protection does not cover the following:

- Ideas or concepts

¹ *The Congress shall have Power ... To promote the Progress of Science and useful Arts, by securing for limited Times to Authors and Inventors the exclusive Right to their respective Writings and Discoveries.*
United States Constitution, Article I, Section 8

Procedures

Processes or systems (These may be protected by patents.)

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Works not fixed in a tangible form

Titles, names, short phrases, slogans (These may be protected by trademark law.)

Lists showing no originality (The amount of time required to compile a list does not matter.)

Factual information

U.S. government publications and other works

Copyright owners enjoy the exclusive right to:

Reproduce the copyrighted work in print, non-print, electronic forms, or in forms not yet invented.

Prepare derivative works based upon the copyrighted work

Distribute copies, recordings, or visuals of the copyrighted work to the public by sale or other transfer of ownership, or by rental, lease, or lending

In the case of literary, musical, dramatic, and choreographic works, pantomimes, and motion pictures and other audiovisual works, to perform the copyrighted work publicly

In the case of literary, musical, dramatic, and choreographic works, pantomimes, and pictorial, graphic, or sculptural works, including the individual images of a motion picture or other audiovisual work, to display the copyrighted work publicly

In the case of sound recordings, to perform the copyrighted work publicly by means of a digital audio transmission.

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⁵ The University of Chicago (<http://www.lib.uchicago.edu/copyrightinfo/fairusechecklist.html>) and Columbia University (www.copyright.columbia.edu) have checklists and further information for deciding if a particular use is within fair use or public domain.

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