



# Copyright A Quick Guide

Copyright is an essential and often automatic right for business. It protects the expression of ideas, is intended to protect the authors of original works and prevents others from copying the work which has been produced. Copyright can help you to control the sharing of your products and information and prevent the exploitation of investment you have made in developing your businesses.

Some key issues to note are:

- Protection in the UK automatically applies to all works recorded in any form provided that they conform to certain requirements.
- In the UK there is no need to register for copyright protection.
- To benefit from copyright protection, your work must be original (meaning it must not copy someone else's work), and in most cases it should also be fixed in some way, for example by writing it down, or capturing it in an image.
- The term copyright protection depends on the type of work: literary, dramatic, musical and artistic works are protected for the author's lifetime plus 70 years; sound, film and broadcast recordings for 50 years and typographical arrangements for 25 years'
- Displaying the copyright symbol © on your work, together with details of the copyright owner and the year of publication, is a way of notifying people of your rights.
- A common misconception is that copyright protects a company or business name. This is incorrect and the only way to get exclusive ownership over a business or company name is by registering a trade mark.

## HOW WE CAN HELP

We can advise on all aspects of copyright protection, including how to prevent someone else from exploiting your work, or enabling someone to use your work under a licence. We can also advise in relation to copyright protection in relation to websites and advise you of the other intellectual property rights that you need to consider. As the founding member of Mackrell International, an international network of independent law firms, we can offer Intellectual Property assistance worldwide.



**Rebecca Howlett**

Partner, London

T: 00 44 (0) 207 240 0521

E: [rebecca.howlett@mackrell.com](mailto:rebecca.howlett@mackrell.com)

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