

HOW TO REGISTER YOUR ART WITH THE US COPYRIGHT OFFICE

STEP ONE: FIND THE FORM YOU NEED

VA (Visual)

Pictorial, graphic, or sculptural works including:

- photographs
- prints
- technical drawings

[Click here to go to form](#)

PA (Performance)

Audiovisual work including:

- animation
- motion pictures
- video art

[Click here to go to form](#)

TX (Literary)

Text-based work including:

- poetry
- visual art where text predominates
- nonfiction/fiction

[Click here to go to form](#)

STEP TWO: CHOSE A REGISTRATION METHOD

Paper

- \$85 for each basic claim*
- Payable by check or money order
- Available by postal mail upon request
- Group Registrations must be completed on paper

Online

- \$35 for each basic claim*
- Payable by credit or debit card
- Fastest processing time
- Can upload certain materials directly as electronic files

STEP THREE: SUBMIT YOUR MATERIALS

- Deposit one complete copy for unpublished work and two copies for published work (best edition)
- Certain works can be deposited electronically – if a deposit needs to be mailed, copies can include:
 - tearsheets
 - transparencies
 - photographs
 - photocopies
 - CD-Roms
- An express mail service is recommended for physical deposits – do not send original pieces!

STEP FOUR: RECEIVE CONFIRMATION

Current process time for e-filing: generally 3-11 months paper forms: 7-16 months

NOTE: Do not need to wait for certificate to publish – registration is established the date the Copyright Office receives the completed application, payment, and copies

Save Money: Register Collections

- Unpublished work can be registered in a collection (i.e. figure drawings, art created in a specific season or year) as long as it is grouped under a single title and registered on the same form
- Work registered in an unpublished collection does not have to be registered again when published
- All images for a job (sketches, roughs, finals) should be registered as a collection before work is published
- Published works can only be registered as a collection if the pieces were actually published in a single unit of publication (i.e. picture book illustrations, photographs for a magazine article)

Advantages to Registration

1. Certificate of registration (if issued before or within five years of first publication) is the most valid proof of copyright
2. Registration is necessary to sue someone for infringing on your copyrighted work
3. If you register your work within three months of publication (or three months prior to an infringement), you may be able to collect statutory damages (an amount between \$750 – \$30,000) and receive reimbursement for attorney fees

Sources and Additional Resources (click to access)

[US Copyright Office Forms](#)

[Copyright Registration for Online Works](#)

[Graphic Artists Guild Handbook: Pricing & Ethical Guidelines, 14th Edition](#)

*Rates as of May 2018, [click here for current rates](#).

This visual is provided for informational purposes only. It does not constitute legal advice; proper advice from a legal professional should be sought when necessary.

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