



## Are separate copyrights needed to protect your story and illustrations?

CopyrightTips from experts\* at [CopyrightsNow.com](https://www.copyrightsnow.com)

Can one copyright protect your text, illustrations and photos?  
The answer depends on who owns the rights to each element.

Copyrights can be confusing - especially if you have content elements in your book created by different creators or authors.

If you own all rights to the story (i.e., text) and illustrations, art and/or photos and they are packaged as one Work, then you can protect these elements on one copyright application as your 'Author Contribution' (see Fig 1).

BOW282-CF Test Manuscript & Docs 48%

CopyrightsNow CopyrightsLock Log-off ? < Next >

Author Information (Literary Work)

First Name Last Name OR Company

Sample Writer

Author Contribution ?

- Text
- Artwork
- Photographs
- Computer Program
- Other...

If 'Other' checked above enter description

Limited to 99 characters

On a later screen 'Limitation for Pre-Existing Material' - you can enter 'Add'l Notes'

Fig 1: Sample screenshot of Author Contribution for 'Text', 'Art' and 'Photos'

However, if you only created the story (i.e., text) and used illustrations, art and/or photos or stock-art in the book, book cover or sleeve from other sources, then your 'Author Contribution' would be 'Text' and the illustrations, art and photos would be listed as 'Pre-Existing 3<sup>rd</sup> Party Material' (see Fig 2).

Author Contribution ?

- Text
- Artwork
- Photographs
- Computer Program
- Other...

Fig 2: Sample showing Author Contribution of 'Text' only

If you also contributed some 'Photos' and used a 'Stock Photos' for some, your 'Author Contribution' should indicate 'Photos' referring only to your photos.

Since some illustrations and/or photos included in the book were created by other *entities* (i.e., *illustrator, artist, photographer, or stock-art*) then you need to limit your copyright registration by excluding these other contributions as 'Pre-Existing 3<sup>rd</sup> Party Material' (see Fig 3).

Fig 3: Sample screenshot showing 'Limitation for Pre-Existing Material'

There is also a concept called 'Work-for-Hire' where you commission another party for certain creative elements (i.e., text article, photos, illustrations, sound recording, etc.) to use in your book, e-book, audio-book, or as part of a motion picture or audiovisual work.

Under a 'Work-for-Hire' agreement, *you* as the contracting party would own all the rights to the work - *even though you did not create it*. The agreement should be in writing and should clearly state it is a 'Work-for-Hire' contract with all rights being owned by you - as the commissioning entity.

With 'Work-for-Hire' agreements, you would treat these other covered elements as if you created them yourself - and list them as your contribution (see Fig 1) and also select 'Yes' for 'Work-for-Hire' (see Fig 4).

Fig 4: Sample screenshot showing 'Work-for-Hire' selection

It's important to note that not all types of work are considered 'Work-for-Hire'. For example, works created by independent contractors, such as freelance writing, illustrations, art, text, editing, narration, etc., are typically not considered 'Work-for-Hire' unless there is a written agreement to the contrary indicating that the commissioning party owns all rights to the work.

To copyright other creative elements, *which are created and owned by a 3<sup>rd</sup> party entity*, such as illustrations, art, photos, etc. **you would use separate copyright registration(s) for each copyright owner (i.e., Claimant).**

Sound confusing? *Rest Easy...* By using a copyright preparation tool like CopyrightsNow®... the system edits and validates your application with AI algorithms... and each application is reviewed by a Specialist to minimize potential issues which may cause USCO to reject your application.

CopyrightsNow® also provides **On-line HELP** for each screen with detailed data element descriptions and 'Use-Case' procedures.

For more information on copyright registration and 'Work-for-Hire', see: [https://www.digi-rights.com/drights/blogs/Blog\\_04a\\_Work-for-Hire.pdf](https://www.digi-rights.com/drights/blogs/Blog_04a_Work-for-Hire.pdf)

To start your copyright registration protection, click to [learn more!](#)

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