

Are separate copyrights needed to protect your story and illustrations?

CopyrightTips from experts* at 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).

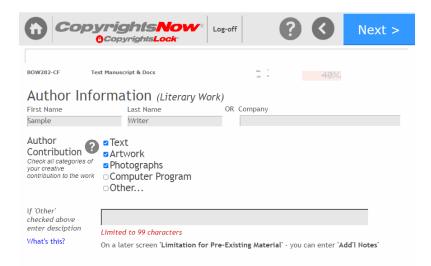


Fig 1: Sample screenshot of Author Contribution for 'Text', 'Art' and 'Photos'

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 3rd Party Material' (see Fig 2).

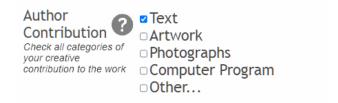


Fig 2: Sample showing Author Contribution of 'Text' only

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 3rd Party Material' (see Fig 3).

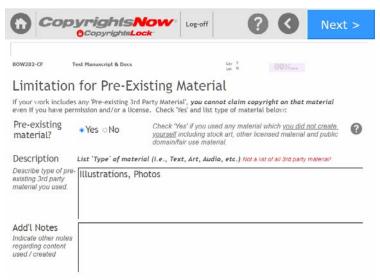


Fig 3: Sample screenshot showing 'Limitation for Pre-Existing Material'

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 3rd 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 Al 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

To start your copyright registration protection, click to learn more!

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