

the artist's J.D. 

# Copyright Registration



**A CHECKLIST FOR  
CREATIVE ENTREPRENEURS**

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# Legal Nitty Gritty

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We've made our best efforts to prepare this workbook, but laws change and the Internet is constantly changing. Because of that, we cannot make any representations or warranties about the contents of this workbook. At some point, the laws, links, or information contained in here will change. And since you have a static version, it'll be out of date.

I'm sure it goes without saying, but this workbook cannot be a replacement for working one-on-one with a lawyer. It's here to give you the tools and information you need to educate yourself about this aspect of your creative business and to empower you to take action. And as such it does not constitute legal advice.



# Copyright Registration

You know that I believe that it is important for you to [register your copyrights](#). A registration with the U.S. Copyright Office turns your copyright from a [fly swatter into a baseball bat](#). Which means when copycats strike (and they will) you can enforce your copyright.

But completing the [copyright registration application](#) is tricky. The system is stuck in the 1990s and is *not* Web 2.0.

## Ready to complete your copyright registration application?

- Starting on [Page 3](#) you'll find best practices for preparing your files
- Starting on [Page 5](#) you'll find worksheets for you to use as you gather your materials
- you can read how to [cost-effectively batch your creations on a single application here](#)
- as you complete your application you can follow along with my step-by-step process in this video series ([Part I](#), [Part II](#), and [Part III](#))
- or if you want even more help, you can [sign up for my copyright registration course here](#)



# File Prep Best Practices

## For visual works

- Files should be saved as .jpg or .png with the Title of the Work being Registered as the file name
- Images should be exported so they are no longer than 900 px on the longest side
- If registering multiple images, they should be grouped as a .zip file
- This .zip file name should be the Series Title
- If .zip file is more than 500 MB it **must** be split into multiple files
- If multiple .zip files are required they should be named sequentially (e.g. SeriesName-1.zip, SeriesName-2.zip)

## For written works

- Files should be saved as .pdf with the Title of the Work being Registered as the file name
- You should use the "Reduce File Size" option within Adobe to decrease the size of the .pdf file.
- If registering multiple writings, they should be grouped as a .zip file
- This .zip file name should be the Series Title
- If .zip file is more than 500 MB it must be split into multiple files
- If multiple .zip files are required they should be named sequentially (e.g. SeriesName-1.zip, SeriesName-2.zip)

## **For audio works**

- Files should be saved as .mp3 with the Title of the Work being Registered as the file name
- If registering multiple audio files, they should be grouped as a .zip file
- This .zip file name should be the Series Title
- If .zip file is more than 500 MB it must be split into multiple files
- If multiple .zip files are required they should be named sequentially (e.g. SeriesName-1.zip, SeriesName-2.zip)

## **For video works**

- Files should be saved as .mp4 with the Title of the Work being Registered as the file name
- If .mp4 file is more than 500 MB it must be split into multiple files
- If registering multiple video files, they should be grouped as a .zip file
- This .zip file name should be the Series Title
- If .zip file is more than 500 MB it must be split into multiple files
- If multiple .zip files are required they should be named sequentially (e.g. SeriesName-1.zip, SeriesName-2.zip)

## REGISTERING A SINGLE WORK

### HOW MUCH WILL IT COST?

Are you the only author *and* copyright owner?

 Y N

Only your work was used to create this work

 Y N

Pay \$35: If you answered "yes" to both and you are registering as an individual  
Pay \$55: If you answered "no" to either and/or you are an LLC/corporation

### WHAT IS THE TITLE OF THE WORK?

\*On the \$55 application this is "Title of the Work being Registered"

### WHO CREATED IT + WHO OWNS IT?

### HAS THE WORK BEEN PUBLISHED?

Not sure? Read [this](#).

If yes,

What year was it created?

When was the first publication date?

If no,

What year was it created?

### IF YOU USED OTHERS WORK, WHAT'S YOURS AND WHAT'S THEIRS?

What did you incorporate? (Excluded)

What did you create? (New Material)

\*On the \$55 application this is the "Limitations of Claim" screen

## REGISTERING MULTIPLE WORKS

### CAN THEY BE BATCHED TOGETHER?

Have any of them been published?  
(Not sure, read [this](#).)

 Y N

If yes, were they all **first published as a unit** *and* owned by the same person?

 Y N

If you answered "yes" they can be batched together.  
If you answered "no" they cannot be batched together.

If no, were they all created by the same person *and* owned by that person?

 Y N

If you answered "yes" they can be batched together.  
If you answered "no" they cannot be batched together.

### WHAT IS THE TITLE OF THE COLLECTION?

This is "Series Title"

### WHAT ARE THE TITLES OF THE WORKS?

Each of these should individually be listed as "Title of Work being Registered"

### WHO CREATED IT + WHO OWNS IT?

## REGISTERING MULTIPLE WORKS

### HAS THE WORK BEEN PUBLISHED?

If yes,  
What year was it created?  
When was the first publication date?

If no,  
What year was it created?

### IF YOU USED OTHERS WORK, WHAT'S YOURS AND WHAT'S THEIRS?

What did you incorporate? (Excluded) | What did you create? (New Material)

This is the "Limitations of Claim" screen



# The end

**I hope this copyright checklist added ease to submitting your copyright registration application!**

At the artist's J.D., we believe that you can achieve success, in your business, creative pursuits, and life, *however you define it*. And a strong foundation helps you build a thriving, sustainable creative business.

**But rather than blindly following an expert's formula or chasing the next flash-in-the-pan trend, you should be finding your own path. We help you confidently take the next step to strengthening your business foundation by sharing our experiences and knowledge.**

And we happen to firmly believe that there can be ease in the legalese of running your creative business. And that doing so doesn't require a bunch of legal jargon.

**Wanna join us? Then check out [the artist's Courtyard](#). And become part of a small, but mighty, army of creative business owners carving their own paths.**

If you aren't ready to take that leap, let's stay connected! Instagram is our favorite. We are [@theartistsjd](#) there (and most places).

We think every creative business should have a lawyer they trust on their team (just like you should have a CPA and PR maven). If you don't have one already and want to make a lawyer-friend, an amazing place to start is the Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts organization in your state. [Here's the state-by-state directory.](#)