



**PROTECT YOU AND YOUR BUSINESS**

# **COPYRIGHT CHECKLIST**

**HOW TO IDENTIFY AND PROTECT  
YOUR COPYRIGHT**

An essential checklist that delves into copyright and how to secure your amazing ideas.

# ABOUT

## HI! I'M CHRISTIE

I'm passionate about helping female entrepreneurs get savvy when it comes to their business operations and investments through financial and legal literacy.

Too often we ignore what we can do and focus on what we can't.

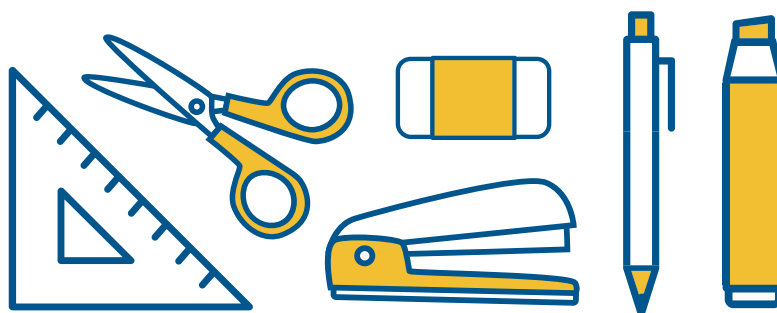
Acknowledging all the parts of a business (even its flaws) is the difference between 'just having' and truly owning and operating a business.

This guide has been specifically designed as a starting point towards protecting your business.

While I have taken utmost efforts to ensure the accuracy of the written content, you are advised to follow information mentioned herein at their own risk. The authors cannot be held responsible for any personal or commercial damage caused by misinterpretation of information.

All readers are encouraged to seek professional advice when needed. While I am a dual med/law graduate, this booklet is intended as information and cannot substitute for professional advice.

If there is anything you just love and want to use in your business/ content here, please feel free to email me [info@christiemartins.com](mailto:info@christiemartins.com) (P.S I love to collaborate!)



# WHY PROTECT YOUR IDEAS?

## THEY'RE THE LIFEBLOOD OF YOUR BUSINESS

Intellectual property, or the 'ideas and concepts' behind your business is what makes you unique from your competition. While not everything can be protected legally there are certain things you can do to secure your ideas, no matter how big or small.

It is vital for business owners to secure their intellectual property just as they would secure any other part of their business. Living in a share-friendly world means that ideas if not secured properly can be quickly replicated and duplicated without any proper credit.

This checklist will be going over what you need to protect in order to secure your ideas. It will only take a few minutes, but will provide valuable insights into how you can start securing your ideas.

# INTRO

## COPYRIGHT IS PART OF A BIGGER PICTURE

For this exercise we will be focusing on Copyright as it is one that is relevant to all businesses. However, there are other types of intellectual property protection. Your business might have some, or all of them:

- Written and artistic content that is published by you: copyright
- Branding, logos and mottos: trademark
- Schematics for tangible inventions or software development: patent/ special design
- Trade secrets

There are also other categories that can fall in between two of these depending on their functionality such as unique packaging (design) and customer data.

# COPYRIGHT

## WHAT IS COPYRIGHT?

The most common form of intellectual property you will come across is copyright. Copyright encompasses most of the website copy, blog posts and content that you publish. It occurs when someone writes or produces a written work or form of art.

As soon as you create the work, it is copyrighted for the lifetime of the author plus 70 years. You can file a simple online form to register a work online depending on your location.

Luckily for us it is automatically protected upon publishing by international laws which tend to cover all forms of creative work.

## IDENTIFYING COPYRIGHT IN YOUR BUSINESS

Because your copyright items are automatically protected upon publishing it isn't imperative to identify every specific piece.

What is important is to be aware of the broader aspects of your business that involve copyright. For example, instead of listing every single blog article you might just want to acknowledge that you have a blog that contains copyrighted material.

You can, if you really really really want to keep a record of every individual piece but it can become really tedious. The only time this is recommended is if you are an author, artist or designer.

# EXERCISE

## YOUR COPYRIGHT

Let's make that list! Here we will be looking at the bigger picture of what your copyright is comprised of. This list isn't exhaustive but is a great place to start and make you aware of all the material that makes your business unique.

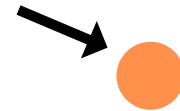
1) Do you own a website? Examine the content on your site that you take time to research and create in your own voice:

- Blog
- Workbooks/ downloadable files
- Website copy
- Unique forms

*Don't get overzealous with copyright - no you can't copyright this dot! Or that arrow....*

2) Do you post on YouTube?

- Videos
- Video description



3) Social media

- Certain posts, especially if they are longer and more descriptive that provide information
- Photos taken by you
- Unique graphics/ drawings that you have designed

4) Podcasting

- Unique music tracks used in intros
- Description/ transcripts
- Content of podcast

5) Are you service-based?

- Your service offering/ copy

6) Lead generation and promotions

- Ad's
- Promotional posts
- Sponsored posts
- Lead page copy
- Giveaways

7) Do you teach via courses/ webinars?

- Webinar content
- Course content

Note: If you are a product-based business who sells a uniquely designed item, you will need to look deeper into other more secure forms of protecting your work. I'll be going over these in the next instalment so stay tuned!

# PROTECTION

## PROTECTING YOUR COPYRIGHT

As mentioned before, most copyright is automatically secured upon publication.

*Not a draft.*

*Not a 'omg I posted this comment online and now it's mine'*

*Not a 'it's been sitting in my bottom drawer for 5 months'*

An actual published work.

You can claim copyright on a work-in-progress however these are very difficult to dispute and requires specialist legal help.

*If you liked it you should have put a ~~ring~~ name on it*

To avoid confusion there are certain steps to take:

- You can fill out an online registration form. These will vary depending on where you live.

**WARNING:** If you want to enter a copyright infringement lawsuit in a federal court you will need to have registered it to make a claim. **So if it is a very important piece of work, please take the time to register it.**

- Putting a copyright symbol on a piece of work

- If putting a symbol will deface the work, take a note of where it was published plus date and time.

- Create a copyright notice for the footer of your website to cover it's contents.

The notice should have a copyright symbol plus name of the owner and the date.

EXAMPLE:

© Copyright [YOUR NAME] [YEAR PUBLISHED]. All Rights Reserved



# HELP! SOMEONE STOLE MY STUFF

## HOW TO APPROACH COPYRIGHT INFRINGEMENT

Ugh...

You had this amazing idea.  
You probably went out of your way to help someone.  
You went the extra mile.

And what happened???

They stole your work!!!

How rude :(

Now before you can run out and play a game of lawyer-roulette, there are some non-legal ways to recapture your work.

Take screenshots and compile all your evidence neatly so you have the evidence you require if necessary.

**WARNING:** It is best to double-check if your work has actually been infringed. General concepts and generalised statements do not count. If in doubt, ask an objective pair of eyes to view the two side-by-side.

1) Reach out to the person who infringed your work.

Sometimes in a highly populated share-friendly digital world people might almost be unaware they have stolen your work. If you provide them with proof most people are willing to either attribute your work or take down the content. The vast majority of copyright disputes are settled this way.

2) They're being stubborn.

No worries. It happens.

Time for a takedown notice.

No I'm not talking about a Chuck Norris pow-pow takedown. I'm talking about a copyright takedown notice. Formally known as a Digital Millennium Copyright Act notice. These are straight forward to do. I go over how to write a DMCA (along with a template) in my free private group! Just click below to join.

**Get your complimentary DMCA template  
when you join the free Facebook group**

3) Cease and desist (with a demand for payment)

If they're still unwilling to cooperate then you will need to look for lawyer-based solutions. Find a lawyer who specialises in copyright! Special note that this can get expensive especially when specialist legal expertise is involved.

4) Copyright infringement suit.

The big guns.

Here you will need to seriously consider the costs associated with a lawsuit. While most copyright infringements will be resolved by this stage it is good to keep in mind the potential end game.

# WHAT IF SOMEONE OVERSEAS HAS STOLEN MY WORK?

It's not the hardest thing to handle. But it does get a bit more complicated.

If someone overseas has infringed on your work, you will be settling the matter in their country. Under their rules and regulations.

While there are international treaties that do protect your copyright in other parts of the world you will need to keep the above in mind if you ever want to take a hard legal route with a lawyer. If you need a lawyer you will have to find one local to the place of the infringement.

# INFRINGING ON OTHERS WORK

## OOPS...

Not many people actually go over the flip-side of copyright but it really is important being aware of your own actions as it is of others.

But sometimes we might accidentally infringe on someone else's work.

And its completely normal because we are bombarded with so much information everyday.

Ads, lead magnets, funnels, social media, etc.

Talk about information overload! That information is continually seeping into our minds almost all day everyday.

## WHAT YOU CAN DO TO PREVENT INFRINGING ON OTHERS

*Easier said than done, isn't it?*

True but its always better to be safe than sorry.

1) Take a look at your research notes/ inspiration board. Does anything on there look too similar? Might need to check if that clever quote or turn of phrase you wrote might have been from somewhere else.

*"But I thought of it on my own I swear"*

You are allowed to borrow concepts from other people. But word-for-word copying is plagiarism. Luckily, it only takes a few tweaks and some other ideas to help avoid it.

2) Use a reverse image search.

These can be done through google, just upload your file and see if there is anything similar.

3) Utilise plagiarism checker.

For content sometimes it can be really hard to determine whether or not a concept has been stolen, as opposed to utilised or borrowed. As a general rule word-for-word copying over 10% of someone's work without their express written permission or correct attribution is a big no-no.

If in doubt, try to change the words around. In the academic world plagiarism has destroyed many careers and reputations.

4) Try and whittle down on the people you follow who are similar to your field.

Here's a bit of practical general advice. You're more likely to emulate people you admire. So watch yourself when you choose a topic similar to one that they have chosen.

5) Watch your advertising and SEO. Using registered trade marks in your SEO and Google ad words advertising is not advised unless you have permission.

# HELP! I GOT TOLD I INFRINGED SOMEONE ELSE'S WORK

Eventually, with a big enough following and reach we will get people who claim that our work has been copied.

While the vast majority of those will have no evidence and have the 'haters gonna hate' vibe you might sometimes encounter some genuinely worrying evidence.

Here are some ways to check and fix that problem.

## 1) Ask for evidence ASAP

This is where most 'haters' will tuck their tail in and walk away.

No evidence = no case. Request screenshots or photos with a date. If you get a DMCA notice evidence should be included with it.

## 2) Check the dates

Who came first? You can use The Internet Wayback Machine to check if their work was there first.

## 3) Check their copyright policy.

Some authors actually allow their work to be copied! So check if there is anywhere where they give permission.

## 4) Look at the geographical location of the person claiming you have infringed.

It's an important step if you choose to fight against a formal notice like a DMCA.

# NOW'S THE TIME TO MAKE A CHOICE

*A Matrix insight into your two options*



## BLUE PILL

*"The story ends"*

If the evidence stacks against you, you are not left with much of a choice.

However - even if you haven't infringed on the work, sometimes it is better to take the blue pill. Walk away without the stress and hassle of hiring lawyers and diving into the harsh legal environment.

You have several options for a peaceful resolution.

- Respond to DMCA saying that you are sorry that they feel you have infringed and that you are willing to come to a resolution.
- Take down the work.
- Re-do it so it lacks the similarities that cause grief.



## RED PILL

*"I show you how deep the rabbit hole goes"*

Okay, its time to get your fight on.

It's a more aggressive approach which should only be utilised if you are very sure you have the financial/ emotional resources to take it on.

That is why it is so important to formally register protection on anything that is deemed vital to the running of your business.

- 1) Gather your evidence along with your copyright registration. If you haven't properly registered it then you will need to discuss your legal rights with a lawyer.
- 2) Look for a local lawyer who specialises in copyright. These are known as intellectual property lawyers. Be assertive and check their history.

# NEED MORE HELP?

**PS. IT'S FREE! :)**

Come by and join my free Facebook group, it's new so any questions you have will be answered thoroughly. My speciality is business protection so I'll be covering topics on customer satisfaction, policies, finances, taxes and other nitty-gritty bits.

I also have new content planned and will be posting it for free in the group so you can protect your business. The main focus of the group is 'Bulletproofing your business and you,' making sure that your business is protected, and your customers are satisfied!

Click the button below to join:

**Get your complimentary DMCA template  
when you join the free Facebook group**

Or you can go to:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/bulletproofyourbiz>

***Biz Savvy  
Boss Babes***

Protect your biz with  
financial and legal literacy



*with Christie M xo*

WWW.CHRISTIEMARTINS.COM

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# LET'S CONNECT!

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**Also, I love collaborating with others so if you want me to help with anything please reach out to me :)**

*Just trying to lead by example ;)*