

COPYRIGHT

Registration & Proof Directory

North America and Europe

A practical directory for visual artists, photographers, illustrators and digital creators.
Official registration systems, evidence/deposit services, access points, filing steps, costs and effective-date guidance.

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How to use this directory

Important distinction

Copyright protection usually arises automatically when an original qualifying work is created. Registration is not normally what creates copyright. This directory separates formal copyright registration from official evidence/deposit systems that merely strengthen proof of existence or chronology.

REGISTRATION

An official copyright registration system exists.

EVIDENCE / DEPOSIT

An official or recognised deposit/timestamp service can provide dated evidence but does not create copyright.

AUTOMATIC ONLY

No general copyright registration system is available; copyright arises automatically if the legal requirements are met.

Quick comparison

Jurisdiction	System	Indicative cost	Core result
United States	REGISTRATION	US \$45 single / \$65 standard	Formal official record
Canada	REGISTRATION	CAD \$63 online	Formal official record
Mexico	REGISTRATION	MXN \$367	Formal official record
United Kingdom	AUTOMATIC ONLY	No registration fee	Automatic protection; no register
France	EVIDENCE / DEPOSIT	€15 / 5 years	Dated evidence
Spain	REGISTRATION	€8.26 telematic (Central)	Formal official record
Portugal	REGISTRATION	€60 online	Formal official record
Germany	AUTOMATIC ONLY	No registration fee	Automatic protection; no register
Italy	EVIDENCE / DEPOSIT	€72 member / €144 non-member	Dated evidence
Belgium, Netherlands & Luxembourg (Benelux)	EVIDENCE / DEPOSIT	€37 online / 5 years	Dated evidence
Ireland	AUTOMATIC ONLY	No registration fee	Automatic protection; no register
Switzerland	AUTOMATIC ONLY	No registration fee	Automatic protection; no register
Greece	AUTOMATIC ONLY	No registration fee	Automatic protection; no register

Fee caution

Fees and filing portals change. Always confirm the live fee and filing procedure immediately before submission.

North America

United States

Authority	U.S. Copyright Office
System	REGISTRATION

Copyright exists automatically, but formal registration has major procedural and evidential importance in the United States. Visual arts registration covers paintings, illustrations, drawings, photographs, graphic art, digital artwork and other pictorial, graphic and sculptural works.

Access points

Phone: +1 202 707 3000

Toll-free: 1 877 476 0778

Email: Use the Copyright Office online contact forms for general enquiries.

Address: U.S. Copyright Office, Library of Congress, 101 Independence Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20559-6000

Web: <https://www.copyright.gov/>

How to register / file

1. Create or sign into an account in the Copyright Office electronic registration system.
2. Choose the appropriate Visual Arts application or qualifying group-registration option.
3. Enter the author, claimant, title, creation and publication information.
4. Pay the filing fee.
5. Upload or otherwise provide the required deposit copy or copies in the form required for that application.
6. Submit the application and retain the submission confirmation and case number.
7. If the claim is approved, retain the registration certificate and its Effective Date of Registration (EDR).

Costs

- Single Application: US \$45 - one work, one author, same claimant, not a work made for hire.
- Standard Application: US \$65.
- Group of published or unpublished photographs: US \$55.
- Group Registration of Two-Dimensional Artwork: US \$85 for a qualifying group.
- Paper filing (Forms PA, SR, TX, VA, SE): US \$125.

Effective date / evidential status

Key U.S. timing rule - certificate date is not the EDR

IMPORTANT: If the application is ultimately accepted, the Effective Date of Registration is not the certificate issue or receipt date. Under 17 U.S.C. §410(d), it is the day on which the Copyright Office has received the application, required deposit and fee, provided those elements are later determined to be acceptable for registration. If the three elements arrive on different dates, the effective date is normally the date the last required acceptable element was received. Submission alone should therefore not be described as a completed registration while the application is pending. Copyright itself already exists independently of registration.

Evidential value

A certificate for a registration made before or within five years after first publication constitutes prima facie evidence of the validity of the copyright and the facts stated in the certificate, subject to the statute. Timing also matters for access to certain remedies under U.S. law.

Official sources

- <https://www.copyright.gov/registration/visual-arts/index.html>
- <https://www.copyright.gov/about/fees.html>
- <https://www.copyright.gov/title17/92chap4.html#410>
- <https://www.copyright.gov/help/faq/faq-office-info.html>

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Canada

Authority	Canadian Intellectual Property Office (CIPO)
System	REGISTRATION

Copyright protection is automatic in Canada. Voluntary registration creates a certificate that can be used in court as evidence that copyright exists and that the registered person is the owner.

Access points

Phone - Canada/USA: 1 866 997 1936

International: +1 819 934 0544

Email: ic.contact-contact.ic@ised-isde.gc.ca

Address: Canadian Intellectual Property Office, Place du Portage I, 50 Victoria Street, Room C-114, Gatineau, Quebec K1A 0C9

Web: <https://ised-isde.canada.ca/site/canadian-intellectual-property-office/en>

How to register / file

1. Access CIPO's copyright registration service and sign in with the required account.
2. Identify the single work by title and category.
3. Provide publication details if applicable.
4. Identify the author and copyright owner.
5. Complete the statutory declaration and agent information if applicable.
6. Pay the fee and submit the application.
7. Do not send a copy of the work with a normal registration application; CIPO states that it does not review or assess the work itself.

Costs

- Online application: CAD \$63.
- Application through another means: CAD \$81.
- No further fee is required simply to maintain a completed copyright registration.

Effective date / evidential status

CIPO states that once it receives a complete application and the appropriate fee, the copyright is registered. The certificate follows as the record of that registration. This differs from the U.S. examination model and should not be described using the U.S. EDR rule.

Evidential value

Registration is not needed for copyright to exist, but the registration certificate is evidence that the copyright exists and that the person registered is the owner.

Official sources

- <https://ised-isde.canada.ca/site/canadian-intellectual-property-office/en/copyright/registration-copyright-filing-online>
- <https://ised-isde.canada.ca/site/canadian-intellectual-property-office/en/complete-list-fees-copyrights>
- <https://ised-isde.canada.ca/site/canadian-intellectual-property-office/en/application-registration-copyright-work>
- <https://www.ised-isde.canada.ca/site/canadian-intellectual-property-office/en/contact-canadian-intellectual-property-office>

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Mexico

Authority	Instituto Nacional del Derecho de Autor (INDAUTOR)
System	REGISTRATION

Mexico operates a public copyright registration system through INDAUTOR for literary and artistic works.

2026 operational note

2026 operational notice: INDARELÍN was temporarily suspended from 18 February 2026 until re-enabled by a later agreement. The official notice authorises email-based processing in the interim, including work-registration submissions, without removing the option of physical filing.

Access points

Phone: +52 55 3601 8200

Registration enquiries: See INDAUTOR directory for current extensions and registration contacts.

Email for work-registration submissions during INDARELÍN suspension: registro.obras@cultura.gob.mx

Address: Puebla 143, Colonia Roma Norte, Cuauhtémoc, 06700 Ciudad de México

Web: <https://www.indautor.gob.mx/>

How to register / file

1. Complete and sign Form RPDA-01 for registration of a work.
2. Provide the applicant/author information and supporting identity/representation documents as applicable.
3. Provide the required copy or copies of the work in the accepted format.
4. Pay the applicable government fee and include proof of payment.
5. Submit through the currently available INDAUTOR channel or physically at the Institute.
6. Retain the electronic or paper registration certificate once issued.

Costs

- Registration of a literary or artistic work: MXN \$367 (2026 tariff).

Effective date / evidential status

Registration creates an official entry in the Public Copyright Registry. Filing and certificate timing should be checked against the current INDAUTOR procedure for the particular submission channel.

Evidential value

The registration provides an official public record of the registered work and rights information. It should be treated as formal registration rather than merely a private timestamp.

Official sources

- <https://www.indautor.gob.mx/>
- https://www.indautor.gob.mx/documentos/informacion-oficial/tarifas_2026.pdf
- https://www.dof.gob.mx/nota_detalle.php?codigo=5781649&fecha=06/03/2026
- <https://www.indautor.gob.mx/documentos/contacto/Directorio-tel.pdf>

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Europe

European Union - general position

There is no single EU copyright registration system. Copyright protection is generally automatic under national laws, although individual countries may offer voluntary registers or official evidence/deposit services. EUIPO trade mark or design registration is not copyright registration.

Official background: https://intellectual-property-helpdesk.ec.europa.eu/regional-helpdesks/european-ip-helpdesk/europe-frequently-asked-questions_en

United Kingdom

Authority

UK Intellectual Property Office (IPO)

System

AUTOMATIC ONLY

Copyright protection is automatic. The UK government states that there is no register of copyright works and no application or fee is required to obtain copyright.

Access points

Phone: 0300 300 2000

Outside UK: +44 (0)1633 814000

Email: information@ipo.gov.uk

Web: <https://www.gov.uk/copyright>

How to register / file

1. There is no UK government copyright-registration procedure for an image.
2. Retain original working files, creation history, metadata, publication records, contracts, hashes and reliable timestamps or deposits as evidence.

Costs

- Government copyright registration fee: £0 - no general copyright register exists.

Effective date / evidential status

Copyright protection arises automatically when a qualifying work is created; there is no later registration date.

Evidential value

Evidence of authorship, creation date and ownership must therefore come from the creator's records and other admissible evidence rather than a UK copyright certificate.

Official sources

- <https://www.gov.uk/copyright>
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/intellectual-property-office/about/access-and-opening>

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France

Authority

Institut National de la Propriété Industrielle (INPI)

System

EVIDENCE / DEPOSIT

French copyright arises automatically. INPI's e-Soleau service is not copyright registration; it is an official dated evidence/deposit service that can establish that specified material existed at a particular date.

Access points

Phone: +33 (0)1 56 65 89 98

Email: Use the INPI online contact form for general enquiries.

Web: <https://www.inpi.fr/>

How to register / file

1. Sign in to the INPI e-procedures portal.
2. Open the Soleau portal and choose an e-Soleau deposit.
3. Choose whether INPI retains the files or only their digital fingerprints, where offered.
4. Upload the artwork or image files and complete the required information.
5. Pay online.
6. Retain the deposit confirmation and identifier.

Costs

- e-Soleau: €15 for a deposit up to 50 MB for five years.
- Additional storage: €10 per additional 50 MB tranche.

Effective date / evidential status

The evidential value relates to the recorded date of the e-Soleau deposit. It does not create copyright and does not turn the work into a registered copyright.

Evidential value

INPI describes e-Soleau as a means of establishing proof of the existence of a creation at a given date, useful in anticipating disputes.

Official sources

- <https://www.inpi.fr/realiser-demarches/propriete-intellectuelle/deposer-une-e-soleau-ou-un-entiercement>
- <https://www.inpi.fr/contactez-nous>

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Spain

Authority	Registro de la Propiedad Intelectual - Ministerio de Cultura
System	REGISTRATION

Spain operates a voluntary official Intellectual Property Register. Copyright exists independently of registration, but the register provides an official record of registered rights.

Access points

Phone: +34 91 589 89 35

Email: info.rpi@cultura.gob.es

Address: Registro Central de la Propiedad Intelectual, C/ Alfonso XII, 3 y 5, 28014 Madrid

Web: <https://www.cultura.gob.es/cultura/areas/propiedadintelectual/mc/rpi/inicio.html>

How to register / file

1. Choose the correct first-registration route for the type of artistic work.
2. Complete the first-registration application and artistic-work documentation.
3. Supply the required representation or digital copy of the work and supporting information.
4. Pay the fee applicable to the Central or relevant Territorial Register.
5. Submit electronically through the RePI system where available, or through an appropriate registry office.
6. Retain the registration record/certificate.

Costs

- Latest fee table currently published by the Central Register is labelled 2025: €8.26 for telematic processing of a first-registration application and €14.97 for in-person processing.
- Territorial Registers can set different fees; the amount must be checked for the competent regional register.

Effective date / evidential status

The legal significance attaches to the official registry entry rather than to the creator merely preparing an application. The competent register's rules should be checked if the exact filing/entry date is important in a dispute.

Evidential value

Registration provides official registry evidence concerning the registered rights. Copyright itself is not created by the registration.

Official sources

- <https://www.cultura.gob.es/cultura/areas/propiedadintelectual/mc/rpi/registro-obras.html>
- <https://www.cultura.gob.es/cultura/areas/propiedadintelectual/mc/rpi/registro-obras/tasas.html>
- <https://www.cultura.gob.es/cultura/areas/propiedadintelectual/mc/rpi/que-es/organizacion/registro-central.html>

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Portugal

Authority	Inspeção-Geral das Atividades Culturais (IGAC)
System	REGISTRATION

Portugal operates a voluntary registration service for literary and artistic works and related rights. Copyright itself exists independently of registration.

Access points

Phone: +351 213 212 500

Email: igacgeral@igac.pt

Address: Rua Artilharia 1, n.º 107, 1099-052 Lisboa

Web: <https://www.igac.gov.pt/>

How to register / file

1. Use the IGAC digital service or the postal/in-person route.
2. Provide author/applicant information and identify the work.
3. For an image or photographic work, provide the required copy/representation and creation information requested by the form.
4. Pay the applicable fee.
5. Submit and retain the registration title/record.

Costs

- Online registration of literary/artistic works: €60.
- Postal or in-person registration: €80.
- IGAC fee page updated 8 April 2026.

Effective date / evidential status

The registration record provides an official registered record, while copyright protection itself is automatic and does not wait for registration.

Evidential value

The register can provide useful official evidence and certified records relating to the registered work and rights.

Official sources

- <https://igac.gov.pt/pt/taxas-e-servicos>
- <https://www.igac.gov.pt/>

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Germany

Authority	Deutsches Patent- und Markenamt (DPMA)
System	AUTOMATIC ONLY

German copyright protection arises by law immediately upon creation of a qualifying work. There is no general copyright-registration system for ordinary artistic works. The DPMA does maintain a special paper-based Register of Anonymous and Pseudonymous Works, but that is not a general copyright register and does not establish copyright.

Access points

Phone: +49 89 2195 1000

Email: info@dpma.de

Web: <https://www.dpma.de/english/>

How to register / file

1. There is no ordinary government copyright registration procedure for an image.
2. Maintain strong evidence of authorship and date: source files, metadata, hashes, publication records, contracts and reliable timestamps/deposits.

Costs

- General copyright registration fee: €0 - no ordinary registration exists.

Effective date / evidential status

Copyright arises immediately upon creation of the qualifying work.

Evidential value

For ordinary named works, evidential proof depends on the creator's records and other admissible evidence rather than a general DPMA copyright certificate.

Official sources

- https://www.dpma.de/english/our_office/about_us/further_duties/cmos_copyright/index.html
- <https://www.dpma.de/english/>

Last checked: 23 August 2026

Italy

Authority

Società Italiana degli Autori ed Editori (SIAE) - Deposit of Unpublished Works

System

EVIDENCE / DEPOSIT

Italian copyright does not depend on depositing an image. SIAE offers a Deposito Opere Inedite service for unpublished works that can provide evidence that the deposited work existed when deposited. It is not a determination that copyright subsists.

Access points

Phone - Authors & Publishers: +39 06 5990 5100

Email: Use the SIAE online assistance form for general support.

Web: <https://www.siae.it/>

How to register / file

1. Complete Declaration Form 350.
2. Provide valid identification.
3. Provide proof of payment.
4. Provide a copy of the unpublished work.
5. Submit in accordance with SIAE's current deposit instructions.
6. Retain the deposit documentation; the ordinary deposit period is five years and can be renewed while the work remains unpublished.

Costs

- SIAE individual member: €72.
- Individual non-member: €144.
- Legal entity: €288.

Effective date / evidential status

The evidential value begins from the accepted deposit record/date, not from creation of copyright itself. Copyright protection is independent of the deposit.

Evidential value

The service is useful as dated evidence for an unpublished work, but SIAE states that deposit does not itself determine whether the work qualifies for copyright protection.

Official sources

- <https://www.siae.it/it/cosa-facciamo/altri-servizi/deposito-opere-inedite/>
- <https://www.siae.it/it/assistenza/>

Last checked: 23 August 2026

Belgium, Netherlands & Luxembourg (Benelux)

Authority

Benelux Office for Intellectual Property (BOIP) - i-DEPOT

System

EVIDENCE / DEPOSIT

Copyright arises automatically. BOIP's i-DEPOT is a dated evidence service that can help prove that a creation or idea existed at a particular time; it does not create copyright.

Access points

Phone - Information Centre: +31 70 349 12 42

Email: info@boip.int

Web: <https://www.boip.int/>

How to register / file

1. Create or sign in to a BOIP account.
2. Choose i-DEPOT and upload the work/material.
3. Complete the deposit details.
4. Choose the retention period and pay the applicable fee.
5. Retain the i-DEPOT evidence/certificate and identifier.

Costs

- Official BOIP tariff material lists online i-DEPOT filing and five-year storage at €37, and ten-year storage at €53.
- BOIP's current paper-envelope order form lists €47 for five-year storage and €68 for ten years.
- Confirm the live tariff at the moment of filing because BOIP tariffs may be revised.

Effective date / evidential status

The evidential date is the recorded i-DEPOT receipt/deposit date. The i-DEPOT does not create copyright.

Evidential value

BOIP describes i-DEPOT as a means of proving that material already existed at a given date.

Official sources

- <https://www.boip.int/>
- https://www.boip.int/uploads/inline/Prijslijst%20BOIP%202019-2%20_EN.pdf
- <https://www.boip.int/uploads/inline/iDEPOT-papier-bestelformulier%20EN.pdf>

Last checked: 23 August 2026

Ireland

Authority	Intellectual Property Office of Ireland (IPOI)
System	AUTOMATIC ONLY

Ireland does not operate a general copyright-registration system for artistic works. Copyright is automatic when the legal requirements are met.

Access points

Phone: +353 (0)56 7720111

Email: ipinfo@ipoi.gov.ie

Address: Intellectual Property Office of Ireland, Government Offices, Hebron Road, Kilkenny, R95 H4XC

Web: <https://www.ipoi.gov.ie/>

How to register / file

1. There is no general IPOI copyright application for an image.
2. Retain original files, drafts, metadata, hashes, publication records, contracts and reliable third-party timestamps/deposits.

Costs

- General copyright registration fee: €0 - no ordinary copyright register exists.

Effective date / evidential status

Copyright protection arises automatically rather than from registration.

Evidential value

Creators should maintain their own strong evidential trail because there is no general Irish copyright certificate for the work.

Official sources

- <https://www.ipoi.gov.ie/>
- <https://www.ipoi.gov.ie/en/about-us/contact-us/>

Last checked: 23 August 2026

Switzerland

Authority	Swiss Federal Institute of Intellectual Property (IPI / IGE)
System	AUTOMATIC ONLY

Swiss copyright protection arises automatically when a qualifying work is created. No ordinary registration formality is required.

Access points

Phone: +41 31 377 77 77

Email: info@ipi.ch

Web: <https://www.ige.ch/en>

How to register / file

1. There is no ordinary federal copyright-registration procedure for an image.
2. Keep strong creation and ownership evidence, including source files, metadata, publication records, contracts, hashes and trusted timestamps.

Costs

- Government copyright registration fee: CHF 0 - no ordinary registration is required or available.

Effective date / evidential status

Copyright begins automatically when the protected work comes into existence; there is no registration date.

Evidential value

Evidence of authorship and timing comes from the creator's records and other reliable proof rather than an IPI copyright certificate.

Official sources

- <https://www.ige.ch/en/protecting-your-ip/copyright>
- <https://www.ige.ch/en>

Last checked: 23 August 2026

Greece

Authority	Hellenic Copyright Organization (OPI / HCO)
System	AUTOMATIC ONLY

Greek copyright protection is automatic for qualifying works. OPI is the national copyright authority and information body but does not operate a conventional general artwork-registration system comparable with the U.S. Copyright Office.

Access points

Phone: +30 213 214 7800

Email: protocol@opi.gr

Address: 5 Metsovou Street, 106 82 Athens, Greece

Web: <https://opi.gr/>

How to register / file

1. There is no ordinary government copyright-registration procedure for an image.
2. Maintain evidence of identity, authorship, creation date and possession of the original work: source/master files, metadata, hashes, publication history, contracts and reliable timestamps/deposits.

Costs

- Ordinary government copyright registration fee: €0 - no general artwork registration system.

Effective date / evidential status

Copyright protection arises automatically upon creation of a qualifying work.

Evidential value

Because there is no conventional general register, a well-preserved evidential trail is especially important when authorship or chronology is disputed.

Official sources

- <https://opi.gr/>
- https://www.opi.gr/wp-content/uploads/vasikos_odigos.pdf

Last checked: 23 August 2026

Recommended record for each image

Regardless of jurisdiction, creators should maintain a consistent record for each protected work:

- | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| • Work title | • Creator/legal name |
| • Artist or professional name | • Creation date |
| • First publication date | • Country of first publication |
| • Copyright owner | • Registration/deposit authority |
| • Registration/application/deposit number | • Registration/deposit date |
| • Effective date of registration where the jurisdiction uses one | • Certificate or official receipt |
| • Registration/deposit status | • Fee paid |
| • Original master filename | • File format/MIME type |
| • Pixel dimensions | • File size |
| • Cryptographic SHA-256 hash | • Selected EXIF data |
| • XMP copyright metadata | • Certified timestamp information |
| • Filing/deposit URL | • Rights transfers or licences |
| • Notes concerning derivative versions | |

Practical classification for artists

Formal registration systems: United States, Canada, Mexico, Spain and Portugal.

Official or recognised evidence/deposit systems: France, Italy and Benelux.

Automatic protection with no ordinary general copyright register: United Kingdom, Germany, Ireland, Switzerland and Greece.

Verification policy

Every maintained version of this directory should record the date on which each jurisdiction was checked. Fees should be treated as guidance only and confirmed with the relevant authority immediately before filing.

Fee notice

Fees are supplied for guidance only and may change without notice. The competent authority's live filing portal or current tariff is authoritative.

Legal notice

This directory is intended as practical information for creators and does not constitute legal advice. Copyright law, registration requirements, evidential rules, remedies and enforcement procedures vary between jurisdictions. Where a dispute, deadline or substantial commercial value is involved, obtain advice from a qualified intellectual-property lawyer in the relevant jurisdiction.