BASICS OF COPYRIGHT
INFORMATION THAT YOU SHOULD KNOW

According to the United States Constitution (Article 1, Section 8, Clause 8), the purpose of copyright is to encourage the creation of original works by guaranteeing for a limited time the sole rights to the creators of those works. Through copyright term limits, copyright essentially balances the financial rights of the creator with the rights of society to use creations for advancement.

WHAT IS COPYRIGHTABLE

An original work in fixed form
Copyrightable works are tangible in a permanent medium that can be communicated.

Introducing Fair Use and Fair Dealing
Fair Use and Fair Dealing set parameters for the authorized use of copyrighted works. In the United States, four factors determine Fair Use: the purpose and character of the use; the nature of the copyrighted work; the amount of the portion used; and the effect of the use upon the potential market for the work.

EXEMPTIONS TO COPYRIGHT

Copyright Protection

Copyright does not last forever
After copyright terms expire, works enter the Public Domain. In some countries works created by governments are in the Public Domain automatically. Some authors dedicate their works to the Public Domain and years ago, if a creator did not comply with copyright laws and procedures, their works may have entered the Public Domain.

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY (IP)

Any form of creativity that the law protects
Copyright is only one form of IP. Although copyright protects original works of authorship, patents protect inventions and trademarks are protected symbols or words that distinguish sources of goods.

PUBLIC DOMAIN

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YOU MAY WANT TO REGISTER YOUR COPYRIGHT WITH A NATIONAL COPYRIGHT OFFICE. THIS HELPS WHEN SUING FOR INFRINGEMENT.