

# Five things you probably didn't know about Intellectual Property Law

Intellectual property (IP) protection is essential for people working across a wide range of industries, from business owners to people working in creative services. With a proper understanding of IP law, you can ensure that your work is thoroughly protected, and you'll know what steps to take if your IP is ever stolen or used without your permission.

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That's why we've compiled five things you probably didn't know about IP law, giving you a better idea of how to safeguard your IP.

## 1. There are Different IP Classifications

IP may fall under any of four different categories at the Intellectual Property Office:

- firstly you have Patents. Inventions can be registered for patent protection, effectively preventing any third party from making, using or selling your invention without your authorisation.
- secondly you have Trade Mark. Anything which distinguishes goods or services, such as names, colours, or logos, can be registered as a trade mark to protect your brand.
- thirdly you have Copyright. For most written, dramatic and artistic works, copyright protection is automatically granted for life plus 50 years, without any need for registering; and
- the fourth category is Design. If you've registered your design, you can prevent anyone else from using that design or imitating its look without your permission.



## 2. Online IP Infringement is a Common Problem

With social networks, it's now easier than ever for your blog posts or images to be stolen and passed off as someone else's work. To deter possible perpetrators and make it easier to seek redress, include copyright and ownership notices on your work.

It's also recommended that you do regular online searches to ensure that your work isn't being used illegally.

## 3. IP Rights Need to be Renewed

Aside from copyright protection, trade marks, designs and patents must be renewed periodically:

- Trade marks must be renewed every 10 years, within a six-month period before or after the due date.
- Registered designs must be renewed every five years for a maximum of 25 years.

For the first renewal, patents must be renewed on the fourth anniversary of filing, and then once a year after that.

## 4. Your IP Protection may not go beyond the UK

With the exception of copyright protection, which is automatically covered in most countries, your intellectual property protection may not apply outside the UK. In many instances, separate applications need to be prepared and submitted for each country.

However, for patents and trade marks, you can get full EU protection with a single application, and applying through the World Intellectual Property Organisation

will protect your IP in all of the countries that have signed up to WIPO's international treaties.

#### 5. You may need more than One Type of IP Protection

Although there are four separate categories of IP protection, a single product or invention may need to be registered under more than one classification; for example, an invention may need to be patented and its design may need to be registered as well.

This is important to note both when registering your IP and when requesting permission to use someone else's.

For more expert legal advice on how to thoroughly protect your work or business from unauthorised use or exploitation, contact us on 020 3475 6751 or via email at [info@carterbond.co.uk](mailto:info@carterbond.co.uk)

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"I would just like to recommend Carter Bond Solicitors and Reena Popat and her team. In particular Howard Lewis Nunn who was dealing with my case, top barrister, highly knowledgable, prompt and quick with responses and letters sent out and an all around really nice humble guy. He resolved the matter quickly and is highly experienced."

Gita Ragone

#### HIGHLIGHT

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