

Chapter 1 : Frequently Asked Questions about Copyright | U.S. Copyright Office

Protection of your work under copyright law depends on a number of factors. Firstly, it is important to remember that copyright protects only the expression of ideas.

By Agora Experts <https://www.agora-gallery.com>: However, along with this convenience comes a whole new wave of dangers and drawbacks, sometimes leaving artists exposed and vulnerable. Art is your craft and your livelihood, and it is a personal investment of your time, money, effort, and soul. If someone clicks a picture of your art and posts it on the internet without crediting you, it qualifies as an act of copyright infringement. The term intellectual property relates to intangible property such as patents, trademarks, copyrights, and trade secrets. If you ever need to take a case to court, think about how well you can demonstrate that you are the creator of the artwork in question. So, legally, how can you protect your art from copyright infringement? Adapt the habit of signing all your works, preferably with the year of completion. You could do it discreetly in a corner, or make your signature a part of the artwork, like Jerry Anderson does. You can also sign the back of the artwork. Even though a copyright is automatically in place at the moment of creation, registering the work ensures you have sufficient proof that the work is yours. It also enables you to demand more money in the event of a copyright infringement suit. Fill out the registration form and pay the required fee. Although Intellectual Property laws are similar throughout, there might be some nuances and differences that you should know about. Keep Digital Records Of Your Work A picture is worth a thousand words – especially if someone is claiming that your work is their own. Having a digital library of your artwork will save you a lot of hassle in the event of copyright infringement, as you can present this record in court. The great thing about photographs is that their metadata often stores the date that the pictures were taken. However, if you have pieces that contain creatures or characters that could conceivably be borrowed or replicated, or if you create images that are very iconic or have high mass market appeal, then you should always protect them using the steps outlined above. However, there are several easy practices to prevent the theft of your images. Stay in touch with us! While nothing is foolproof, there are some measures you can take to help protect your art on the web. This makes it impossible for those on the web to simply copy and paste the image. You can do this by downloading special slideshow converters or consulting a web design professional. Windows or Mac, you can use almost any image-editing software to resize images. From Photoshop to Paint, the process is universally pretty similar. Converting to lower resolution can be a little trickier. You should also include the year of completion as well as your name into this watermark. It should look something like – This curated space image was featured on our Facebook Page , and in order to protect the image digitally created by us as well the painting of our artist, Corinne Garese , we could place a watermark to denote authorship. However, avoiding social media altogether can be a serious disadvantage too. So, how do you protect your image? Here are some tips! How about other social media websites? Though this seems like an outright copyright infringement, the issue is actually in a legal gray-area. One thing we know for sure – these images would have been protected if they had been registered federally with a copyright. With over 30 years of experience representing artists from around the world, Agora Gallery offers artists the opportunity to present their work to a broad range of national and international art collectors and buyers. Looking for an opportunity to enhance your career? If you have any questions, let us know in the comments or email us at blogs@agora-gallery.com. This post is also available in:

Chapter 2 : Copyright : Where We Stand

In addition to certain guarantees provided by law, LegalZoom guarantees your satisfaction with our services and support. Because our company was created by experienced attorneys, we strive to be the best legal document service on the web.

Get millions of images for free with Getty Images Embed Get millions of images for free with Getty Images Embed Our new Embed feature makes it easy to share images on social media, blogs and websites. Use of Embed enables you to use our images to connect and engage with your audience, creating infinite opportunities for richer visual storytelling. Discover Creative Commons Discover Creative Commons Another potential source for free images is Creative Commons, a nonprofit organization dedicated to making it easy for people to share and legally build upon the works of others. Creative Commons CC licenses allow content creators to determine which rights they reserve “ and which rights they waive “ for the benefit of others. Restrictions include whether an image can be used for personal or commercial purposes and whether or not the photographer requires attribution or credit. The CC license is generally not useful for commercial or business use and does not include legal protection, so if a dispute arises about an individual, building, trademark or artistic work in that image, the customer may be liable for that claim. Make sure free images are truly free Make sure free images are truly free Looking for free images? Here are a few tips to help you stay on the right side of copyright law. The truth is, no matter where images are posted, they will most likely be subject to copyright laws. While free images are widely available, they typically do not include any legal protection. Free images are typically low-resolution, so the trade-off is measured in quality. Licensing an image through a photo library may cost a bit, but doing so allows you to choose the best resolution for your project and use it with confidence. This Getty Images site, which upsells to iStock by Getty Images, is a place where photographers share images with others at no charge. The license terms on Freeimages are clear, and you can easily see whether model and property releases are in place should you want to use one of these images commercially. Explore image sources Explore image sources Need help finding images you can legally use? Here are some useful definitions and tips to help guide you through the process. Following payment of the license fee, no additional royalty payments are owed, but the original license is necessary to protect yourself and clients, and to do the right thing by the photographer. Find image sources with PicScout Find image sources with PicScout PicScout enables you to easily find and license commercially available images with a simple search. With more than million images available, you can track down owners of unidentified images anywhere on the Web, which can save time when buying digital content. Google Image Search is an unreliable way to find work that you can use. Most of the content served up by the big search engines is not licensed and is presented in its entirety, without the permission of the content creators, which we feel exceeds the bounds of fair use. In most cases, use of images taken from the Internet requires permission and the correct licenses. In addition, new technology now enables copyright owners to identify unlicensed imagery and act to protect their rights. The image is then flagged to the copyright owner so that they can check whether the correct license or permission is in place. Copyright law gives the owner the right to control use of their image. While many copyright owners want their image to be used and seen, there are usually restrictions on how, when or where the image may be used. Unless a creator expressly gives up their rights to a work, those rights are reserved. Under the Copyright Act, copyright protection begins from the moment a photo or other image is created. Glossary Appropriating work Appropriating work Appropriating work is the practice of intentionally borrowing, copying or altering existing images from another context to create new works of art. Attribution Attribution is the act of establishing a particular person as the creator of a work of art. Creative Commons Creative Commons Creative Commons is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the expanding the range of creative works available for others to legally build upon and share. Offering several free copyright licenses, creators are able to determine which rights they reserve “ and which rights they waive “ for the benefit of recipients or other creators. Derivative work Derivative work Derivative work is a work that is based on or derived from one or more already existing works. Fair use Fair use Fair use is one of several legal limitations

on the exclusive rights granted to copyright owners. It allows people other than the copyright holder to copy part or, in some circumstances, all of a copyrighted work, even where the copyright holder has not given permission or objects. Four factors refer to the guidelines courts use on a case-by-case basis to evaluate fair use claims: Public domain Public domain Public domain refers to works that are not restricted by copyright and do not require a license or fee to use. Works in the public domain are those whose intellectual property rights have expired, have been forfeited or are inapplicable. The duration of copyright varies for different types of work and from country to country. The following are examples of public domain in the US: All works published before 1923. Property and model releases Property and model releases are legally binding documents that indicate that the model or property representative grants their permission to use their likeness for commercial purposes. The purpose of the release is to ensure that you have permission of the model or property owner and to protect you from and future lawsuits or claims arising from defamation and invasion of privacy disputes. Royalty-free Royalty-free means that, once licensed, an image may be used many times for certain uses without paying further fees – but the initial license is necessary to protect yourself and your clients. Trademark Trademark allows protection of short phrases, distinctive words, titles, slogans, symbols, logos and other devices used to distinguish products, services and images from others. Do people, trademarks, landmarks or artistic works appear in the image? Have you considered whether the image is rights-managed or royalty-free? Have you confirmed the volume of the print run? Do you know the duration of the license you need? How long do you want to use the image? For rights-managed images, prices vary for terms lasting from one week to several years. Ensure the license expiration date covers the length of the campaign or project. Are you clear on how the image will be used?

Chapter 3 : Protecting Your Cannabis Copyrights (Yes, You Have Them) | Canna Law Blog

You may express your ideas in writing or drawings and claim copyright in your description, but be aware that copyright will not protect the idea itself as revealed in your written or artistic work. Does my work have to be published to be protected?

Until 1978, a published work had to contain a valid copyright notice to receive protection under the copyright laws. But this requirement is no longer in force – works first published after March 1, 1978, need not include a copyright notice to gain protection under the law. This makes it much easier to win a copyright infringement case and perhaps collect enough damages to make the cost of the case worthwhile. And the very existence of a notice might discourage infringement. Finally, including a copyright notice may make it easier for a potential infringer to track down a copyright owner and legitimately obtain permission to use the work. What is a valid copyright notice? A copyright notice should contain: In the United States, a copyright owner can significantly enhance the protection afforded by a basic copyright. This is done by registering the copyright with the U.S. Copyright Office. Copyright protection rules are fairly similar worldwide, due to several international copyright treaties, the most important of which is the Berne Convention. Under this treaty, all member countries – and there are more than 100, including virtually all industrialized nations – must afford copyright protection to authors who are nationals of any member country. This protection must last for at least the life of the author plus 50 years, and must be automatic without the need for the author to take any legal steps to preserve the copyright. Then apply the following rules to see if the copyright has expired: All works published in the United States before 1978 are in the public domain. Works published after 1978, but before 1989, are protected for 95 years from the date of publication. If the work was created, but not published, before 1978, the copyright lasts for the life of the author plus 70 years. However, even if the author died over 70 years ago, the copyright in an unpublished work lasts until December 31, 2021. For works published after 1978, the copyright lasts for the life of the author plus 70 years. However, if the work is a work for hire that is, the work is done in the course of employment or has been specifically commissioned or is published anonymously or under a pseudonym, the copyright lasts between 95 and 120 years, depending on the date the work is published. Lastly, if the work was published between 1964 and 1977, you must check with the U.S. Copyright Office to see whether the copyright was properly renewed. If the author failed to renew the copyright, the work has fallen into the public domain and you may use it. You can also hire a private copyright search firm to see if a renewal was filed. Finally, you may be able to conduct a renewal search yourself. Renewal searches for earlier works can be conducted at the Copyright Office in Washington D.C. Call the Copyright Office for more information. With one important exception, you should assume that every work is protected by copyright unless you can establish that it is not. And even for works published before 1978, the absence of a copyright notice may not affect the validity of the copyright – for example, if the author made diligent attempts to correct the situation. For example, scholars must be free to quote from their research resources in order to comment on the material. The fair use statute requires the courts to consider the following questions in deciding this issue: Is it a competitive use? How much material was taken compared to the entire work of which the material was a part? The more someone takes, the less likely it is that the use is fair. How was the material used? Is it a transformative use? If the material was used to help create something new it is more likely to be considered a fair use than if it is merely copied verbatim into another work. Criticism, comment, news reporting, research, scholarship and non-profit educational uses are most likely to be judged fair uses. Uses motivated primarily by a desire for a commercial gain are less likely to be fair use. If You Want to Use Material on the Internet Each day, people post vast quantities of creative material on the Internet – material that is available for downloading by anyone who has the right computer equipment. Because the information is stored somewhere on an Internet server, it is fixed in a tangible medium and potentially qualifies for copyright protection. Whether it does, in fact, qualify depends on other factors that you would have no way of knowing about, such as when the work was first published which affects the need for a copyright notice, whether the copyright in the work has been renewed for works published before 1978, whether the work is a work made for hire which

affects the length of the copyright and whether the copyright owner intends to dedicate the work to the public domain. If you want to download the material for use in your own work, you should be cautious. Generally, you can claim a fair use right for using a very small portion of text for commentary, scholarship or similar purposes.

Chapter 4 : How To Copyright And Protect Your Ideas

Your business website is a valuable asset for marketing, sales, and customer service power and you should protect it just like you would your other business property. You can do that by copyrighting it, and this is a step-by-step process.

Yet, like these other forms of intellectual property, copyrights can afford their holders with market dominance and profitability when utilized correctly. Almost all marijuana businesses own numerous unregistered copyrights, whether or not they realize it. This post briefly covers the concept of copyright and how it applies to the cannabis industry. What does copyright protect? Copyright is a form of IP law that protects creative expression of ideas. Specifically, copyright protects original works of authorship, including literary, dramatic, musical, and artistic works, such as poetry, novels, movies, songs, computer software, and architecture. The cannabis industry protects copyrights in a variety of ways. This might include descriptions of a particular product or just the layout of the website itself. Physical media like labels, product tags, packaging, logos, instructional materials, and product design can all be protected by cannabis industry copyrights. Is registration necessary for copyright protection? Accordingly, registration is not necessary for copyright protection. However, registration affords significant benefits, particularly in the context of copyright infringement. Given the fact that copyrights are inexpensive and quick to register online, we recommend registration in most cases. Are cannabis copyrights registrable and enforceable? The Copyright Act contains virtually no prohibitions on what types of work are eligible for copyright protection, including cannabis-related work. Instead, the Copyright Act simply contemplates the level of originality in a given item. Therefore, like in patent infringement lawsuits, there is a potential risk that the federal illegality of cannabis would be raised in various litigation aspects and would impeded the enforceability of a cannabis copyright. To this date, no cannabis copyright infringement claim has been raised, making it impossible to determine whether cannabis copyrights are in fact enforceable. What rights does copyright afford? Copyright affords the holder the exclusive right to control his work through reproduction, distribution, public display and performance. Copyright also gives the holder the right to be compensated for the use of his work. How long does copyright protection last? Generally, works created by individuals are copyright protected for the life of the author, plus 70 years. Works created anonymously, pseudonymously, and for hire are protected for 95 years from the date of publication or for years from the date of creation, whichever is shorter. Compared to the maximum shelf life of a patent, or terms of trademark registration, copyright protections last incredibly long. How does copyright infringement occur? In addition, the terms of the license agreement may limit the transfer of those rights to a specific period of time, to a physical location or to the means through which the rights may be exercised. Note, however, that the legal doctrine of fair use, which promotes freedom of expression, permits certain unlicensed uses of copyrighted works, such as criticism, comment, news reporting, teaching and research. As such, every cannabis business should take the time to determine which of its assets are copyrightable and whether registration would give them a competitive edge.

Chapter 5 : Five Things You Can Do to Protect Your Online Images |

Although a copyright notice is not required, (work is automatically subject to copyright protection under law), displaying a notice shows that you have an awareness of copyright and take infringements of your work seriously.

So why are Google, Apple, and Microsoft spending billions on it? Shutterstock Images How important is intellectual property protection to your startup? Not too long ago, defensible IP was one of the top things venture capitalists wanted to see in a startup. But the success of several high-profile tech startups, such as Twitter and Facebook, that are relatively weak on patentable intellectual property, has caused many to rethink that assumption. After all, creating and maintaining a robust IP portfolio is expensive. And the lean startup model is all about getting to market fast with the minimum viable product. Launch first, patent later! if at all. But every startup "lean or not" needs to plan for success. If your startup starts to scale quickly, a strong IP portfolio will be vitally important to your ability to play the long game. So what should startups do to protect their IP assets? Patent what is important to others, not just you Make time to get smart on intellectual property. Investing a day or two early on will save headaches later. Reduce costs by doing your own IP searches first. Start with a Google patent search at google. Save money by working with a patent attorney from a different geography. Invest in well-written non-disclosure agreements NDAs. Make sure your employment agreements, licenses, sales contracts and technology transfer agreements all protect your intellectual property too, right from the get-go. File as fast as you can. A patent application holds your place in line. You will have 12 months from that initial submission to expand upon your filing. And remember, US patents can take more than five years to issue. Investigate international patents if key competitors are outside the US. A US patent will not protect you against competitors in Europe, never mind China. Think hard about the future. From your vantage point, what does the future look like? Use this information to devise your patent strategy, and to figure out which of your work needs to be legally protected. From there, your patent applications should flow. As President Lincoln once remarked, the patent system adds "the fuel of interest to the fire of genius. If you make it easy for others to steal your ideas, you can ultimately end up washing away your own path to success. Apr 19, More from Inc.

Chapter 6 : Protecting Your Brand through Copyright | James Hsui, PLLC

Do's And Don'ts. Let's start with the Don'ts: Don't ask anyone to sign an NDA to read your calendrierdelascience.com there are certain cases where this would make sense, in general, this is not common practice.

James Hsui 6 May There is significant overlap between copyright and trademark protection. Some material, such as logos and packaging, can be protected both under trademark and copyright laws. This post will provide a couple of examples where copyright has been used for brand protection ; describe the advantages of using copyright to protect your brand ; and finally, describe the drawbacks of using copyright over trademark. In *Parfums Givenchy v. Amongst* other defenses, defendant argued that the Givenchy Amarige Perfume box design was not copyrightable. The Givenchy Amarige Box Advantages of Protecting your Brand through Copyright Using copyright to protect your brand provides several advantages over trademark. Specifically, copyright has advantages in ease of registration, cost, industry scope and global reach. Copyright registration is an easier process. Trademark protection, in the U. So, to properly register a logo as a trademark, for example, you would need to provide evidence of the logo being used with products in the class or classes you will be registering the mark under. Copyright protection is obtained upon creation of a copyrightable work. Thus, to register a logo for copyright purposes, you only need submit a copy of the logo. Unlike a trademark registration, there is no drawn out examination process for copyright registration. This is because trademarks are industry specific and based on the idea of protecting the consumer from being confused as to the source of a product. Copyright, on the other hand, is industry-blind and based on the idea of protecting the creativity of an author. Lastly, copyright has a much more global reach. Trademarks are territorial in nature. You must separately obtain trademark protection in every country you want protection in although there are processes that make it easier. As discussed in the post, *How do I get Copyright Protection? Drawbacks of Using Copyright over Trademark* Copyright has two main disadvantages over trademark: Firstly, the scope of material that can be copyrighted is much smaller than that which can be trademarked. Virtually anything can be trademarked, color such as Tiffany Blue , a chime of three notes, slogans, words and symbols amongst others. To be copyrightable, a work must meet a minimum threshold of creativity. Words, colors, symbols and slogans generally do not meet the creativity standard; very simple logos can also fail to meet the standard and not be copyrightable. Secondly, copyright protection expires after the statutory period. Once the period lapses, the copyrighted work falls into the public domain. A trademark, on the other hand, can continue on perpetually, so long as the trademark keeps being used. Given the above, what type of intellectual property protection scheme should you use for your brand? Trademark and copyright are not exclusive choices, and many companies utilize both when available. Doing so would provide the widest protection for your brand. However, it is good to know that copyright can provide a quicker, less expensive and more easily obtainable avenue of protection in many circumstances. This blog post is provided for general informational purposes only. It is not legal advice, and should not be a substitute for legal advice. If you have questions or comments about the post, or would like to learn more about something in the post, please feel free to contact me.

Chapter 7 : Protecting Your Art: Copyrights - Agora Gallery - Advice Blog

Frequently asked questions to help you protect your creative work and avoid infringing the rights of others.

Protecting your work with copyright Illustration: The ultimate goal of copyright is the creation and dissemination of knowledge. Therefore, one of the most delicate goals of copyright is to strike a balance between protecting creative works and allowing the public to use them. Protection of your work under copyright law depends on a number of factors. Firstly, it is important to remember that copyright protects only the expression of ideas, not the ideas themselves. This means for example that if you paint a landscape, another person is not prevented from taking a photograph of the same landscape. According to UK copyright law, a work is considered original if its creator uses skill, labour, judgement and effort to create it. Here are some important things to know about copyright: After that, the work is in the public domain and it may be re-used for free without the need to get permission from the copyright owner. So, in order to benefit from copyright your work must be your own, you must have used your own skill, labour, judgement and effort to make sure that your work is original. It must be in a relevant medium see list below and be in a fixed form.

Ownership For literary, dramatic, musical or artistic works, the author or creator of the work is the first owner of any copyright in it. In the UK, the first copyright owners of a film are the producer and the principal director. The first copyright owner of a sound recording is the record producer s ; of a broadcast it is the broadcaster; and of a published edition it is the publisher. However, if you made the work as an employee, your employer is usually the copyright owner, unless you have agreed otherwise. In these cases contractual terms are often the actual rules governing the ownership of a work, so you should carefully check all clauses to understand who owns the several exclusive rights involved. If you are a student at University or Film School for example, the institution often has provisions for copyright in anything you create in connection with your enrolment. If you create a work with other people, this usually results in joint ownership of the copyright. If someone wants to use this work, they need the permission of all the copyright holders, not just one. Copyright can be bought, sold, inherited or transferred and therefore someone other than the original creator may hold the copyright in a work. However, this does not apply to moral rights, as explained below; these remain with the creator.

Proving ownership As mentioned, copyright is granted automatically. This is not essential but it might be a good idea to show the owner of the work and when protection started. If you wanted to, you could register your copyright through an online service or log your work with a bank or Solicitor. Some people also send themselves a copy of their work by registered post, or email it to themselves to give clear parentage to their work. However, nowadays this is not as relevant as it used to be, since with computer records the dating of production is almost always possible.

Economic rights The copyright owner has the exclusive right to copy the work, issue copies of the work to the public, rent or lend the work to the public, perform, show or play the work in public, communicate the work to the public, edit or adapt the work, sell or license the copyright for use by others. As mentioned above, the exclusive right allows rightsholders to exclude others from using their work without permission. The process of getting permission can be quite complicated, since all the rights mentioned above may co-exist in one single work, and each of them may have several owners.

Moral rights The copyright regime consists of not only economic rights but also moral rights. It is important to know that the moral right to be identified as the author of a work does not arise until it has been asserted. As such, it is good practice always to assert this right. You may do this by including a statement such as the following in your work: Joe Bloggs has asserted his right under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act, , to be identified as the author of this work. Moral rights also include the right not to have a work falsely attributed to you and the right to privacy of certain photographs and films. Unlike economic rights, moral rights cannot be sold or assigned to another person. Therefore, even when you sell your exclusive rights to a publisher or a broadcaster for example, you still hold your moral rights. Whoever acquires the economic rights to your work will be able to exploit your work, but in doing so they will be obliged to credit you as the author of the original work. In general though, you should try to avoid waiving your moral rights unless absolutely necessary. Exceptions to copyright Having copyright in your work allows you to exploit your creation and

exclude other people from using it. If someone uses your copyright material without your permission, you then have the right to take legal action against them and claim damages. However, it is important to note that there are exceptions to copyright; these are circumstances in which a person does not need the permission from the copyright owner to use his or her work. These include quotation , news reporting , education , research and private study , archiving and preservation. Copyright can exist in any of the following types of work: One source of controversy in copyright cases is often the status of work created by an employee in the course of their employment. The originality which is required relates to the expression of the thought. UK copyright law is also subject to the terms of several international treaties.

Chapter 8 : Protecting your work with copyright

Which Form Should I Use? Which form should I use? How do I copyright my business name? Which form do I use?

But there are things you can do to protect your photos. Register your copyrights to your photos. When a photo is not registered with the U. Legal fees and costs also may be recovered from the infringer. Additionally, you need to have received your registration certificate to file a complaint for a copyright infringement lawsuit in most jurisdictions. Check my article for instructions on how to register your work: Put your copyright notice on or adjacent to each of your images. The official copyright notice has three parts: The third required part of a copyright notice is the name of the copyright owner. The final form looks like this: You may use the copyright notice without registering your images with the U. When you use the copyright notice it may stop someone from stealing your photographs, either because it serves as a reminder that the work is protected or because the notice interferes with the use of the work when it is part of the photo. Section of the U. Copyright Act makes it illegal for someone to remove your CMI from your photo to hide the infringement. Make it more difficult for others to use your photos without your permission. Even though a burglar can break into your home, you still lock your door and set the alarm. Do the same to protect your images. Prosecute unauthorized uses of your images. Fortunately, there are many tools to battle copyright infringement. Thanks to the U. Check my article here: There are some risks in sending the letter yourself. First, the infringer may attempt to preempt an infringement lawsuit and file a request for declaratory judgment that the use is authorized. Second, your demand for payment may be admissible against you if an infringement case is filed. If you demand too little, then it may limit your ultimate recovery. When an attorney gets involved, the matter is escalated and tensions rise. While the infringer may be more defensive, the weight of your demand letter is dramatically increased if it comes from an attorney and the infringer generally takes the matter more seriously. Your most aggressive option is to pursue your legal remedies by filing suit. Unless you have a breach of contract or some other state claim, you must file your infringement claim in a federal district court. To file suit, it is best to hire an attorney to help you because the legal procedures are complicated. Note that you have three years from the date of infringement to sue for copyright infringement. Technology via the Internet is a wonderful and horrible tool for photographers. Use it to your best advantage. Check Photo Attorney on Lynda. The information here is for educational purposes only and does not constitute legal advice.

Chapter 9 : Music & Money: Protecting Your Songs

Professional takedown services. We offer fast and efficient stolen content removal services to help you fight infringement and protect your personal and commercial intellectual property.

You do NOT own that idea. You own only your execution. Two things you need to understand: You have the copyright already: It only protects the specific expression or execution of your ideas. That your execution and their execution are identical or similar enough to suggest actual theft. And in order to prove those things, you need evidence, which is what copyrights, WGA registration, and sealed envelopes all offer. Not protectionâ€ just potential pieces of evidence. In other words, one folder with all of the evidence. If something does happen where you are a victim of theft, clear records of who sent what material to whom and when can help. This is most important as part of your meeting strategy to sell your work, but in the event something happens, these records can be useful. You can also pre-register certain works in progress. This registration is required to sue for copyright infringement in federal court. See the website for more details. While there are certain cases where this would make sense, in general, this is not common practice. It makes you look like a rookie. This is what amateurs do. The most you should leave is a business card with your contact information although if they ask you for your script, then by all means give it to them and make a note of when, where, and to whom you gave the material. Keep your email, backup your computer, keep records of meetings, mail an archive to a friend, and register the final draft of your project with the WGA and US Copyright Office. Do send the following informal email when you give someone a hard copy of your script. Do come up with a lot of ideas. A person with a fertile imagination, hard-core work ethic, and the commitment to succeed is worth a lot. The best way to protect your ideas is to be a person with whom people want to work. Do consider working with an attorney. Often, ideas are in the air, and many writers are working on variations of the same thing, developing in parallel, completely unaware of each other. Sometimes, the version of an idea that lives is the one that gets to market first. The best protection for your ideas and your career is to get feedback, adapt, and constantly improve. Thanks to entertainment attorney Adam Kagan for his help. She has helped many writers get agents and managersâ€.