

# Deposit Requirements for Registration of Claims to Copyright in Visual Arts Material

This circular is a simplified version of the deposit requirements for registering claims to copyright in visual arts materials. It should be viewed only as a basic guide; the examples on pages 3 and 4 are not meant to be restrictive. For the deposit regulations of the Copyright Office, see title 37 of the *Code of Federal Regulations*, sections [202.19](#), [202.20](#), and [202.21](#).

For instructions on how to register a claim to copyright in visual arts works, see [Circular 40](#), *Copyright Registration for Works of the Visual Arts*.

## Basic Definitions

It is helpful to know several basic definitions before considering specific requirements.

### **Complete Copy**

A “complete copy” of an unpublished work is a copy that represents the complete copyrightable content of the work being registered. A complete copy of a published work is one that contains all elements of the unit of publication, including those which, if considered separately, would not be copyrightable subject matter. The copies deposited for registration should be physically undamaged.

### **Best Edition**

The “best edition” is the edition published in the United States at any time before the date of deposit in the Copyright Office that the Library of Congress determines to be most suitable for its purposes. Generally, when more than one edition is available, the best edition is larger rather than smaller; color rather than black and white; and printed on archival-quality rather than less-permanent paper. See [Circular 7B](#), *Best Edition of Published Copyrighted Works for the Collections of the Library of Congress*, for additional information.

### **Identifying Material**

“Identifying material” or “ID material” generally consists of two-dimensional reproduction(s) or rendering(s) of a work in the form of photographic prints, transparencies, photocopies, or drawings that show the complete copyrightable content of the work being registered.

## Specifications for Identifying Material

Copyright Office regulations require the deposit of identifying material instead of copies for three-dimensional works and for works that have been applied to three-dimensional objects. Examples of such works include sculpture, toys, jewelry, artwork on plates, and fabric or textile attached to or part of a three-dimensional object such as furniture. Identifying material must also be submitted for any pictorial, graphic, or sculptural work that exceeds 96" in any dimension.

In certain cases, identifying material is permitted; in other cases, it is required. (See table on page 3 and 4.) Identifying material should meet the following specifications.

- **Type of identifying material:** The material should consist of photographic prints, transparencies, photocopies, drawings, or similar two-dimensional reproductions or renderings of the work in a form visually perceivable without the aid of a machine or device.
- **Color or black and white:** If the work is a pictorial or graphic work, the material should reproduce the actual colors employed in the work. In all other cases, the material can be in black and white or can consist of a reproduction of the actual colors.
- **Completeness:** As many pieces of identifying material should be submitted as are necessary to show clearly the entire copyrightable content of the work for which registration is being sought.
- **Number of sets:** Only one set of complete identifying material is required. **NOTE:** With respect to three-dimensional holograms, contact the Copyright Office for additional information.
- **Size:** Photographic transparencies must be at least 35mm in size and, if 3"×3" or less, must be fixed in cardboard, plastic, or similar mounts; transparencies larger than 3"×3" should be mounted. All types of identifying material other than photographic transparencies must be not less than 3"×3" and not more than 9"×12", but preferably 8"×10". The image of the work should show clearly the entire copyrightable content of the work.
- **Title and dimension:** At least one piece of identifying material must give the title of the work on its front, back, or mount and should include an exact measurement of one or more dimensions of the work.

## Copyright Notice

Before March 1, 1989, the use of copyright notice was mandatory on all published works, and any work first published before that date should have carried a notice. For works first published on and after March 1, 1989, use of the copyright notice is optional.

For a work published with notice of copyright, the notice and its position on the work must be shown clearly on at least one piece of identifying material. If necessary because of the size or position of the notice, a separate drawing or similar reproduction can be submitted. Such reproduction should be no smaller than 3"×3" and no larger than 9"×12" and should show the exact appearance and content of the notice and its specific position on the work. For more information about copyright notice, see [Circular 3, Copyright Notice](#).

## For Further Information

### *By Internet*

Online registration, circulars, announcements, regulations, all application forms, and other materials are available on the Copyright Office website at [www.copyright.gov](http://www.copyright.gov).

### *By Telephone*

For general information about copyright, call the Copyright Public Information Office at (202) 707-3000 or 1-877-476-0778 (toll free). Staff members are on duty from 8:30 AM to 5:00 PM, eastern time, Monday through Friday, except federal holidays. Recorded information is available 24 hours a day. To request paper application forms or circulars, call (202) 707-9100 or 1-877-476-0778 and leave a recorded message.

### *By Regular Mail*

Write to

*Library of Congress  
Copyright Office—COPUBS  
101 Independence Avenue, SE  
Washington, DC 20559*

## Required Deposit

Nature of Work: <i>Two-Dimensional</i>	Published	Unpublished
Advertisements (pictorial)	1 copy as published or prepublication camera-ready copy	1 photocopy, proof, drawing, copy, or layout
Artwork for bed, bath, and table linens or for wearing apparel ( <i>For example:</i> heat transfer or decal already applied to T-shirt)	ID material preferred in all cases; ID material required if copy cannot be folded to 4" thickness or less; 1 copy permitted if it can be folded to 4" thickness or less	same as published
Blueprints, architectural drawings, mechanical drawings, diagrams	1 complete copy	1 copy
Book jackets or record jackets	1 complete copy	1 copy
Commercial print published in newspaper or other periodical	1 copy of entire page or pages	
Commercial print or label ( <i>For example:</i> flyer, label, brochure, or catalog used in connection with sale of goods or services)	1 complete copy	1 copy
Contributions to collective works (photographs, drawings, cartoons, and so on published as part of a periodical or anthology)	1 complete copy of best edition of entire collective work; complete section containing contribution if published in newspaper; entire page containing contribution; contribution cut from newspaper; or photocopy of contribution as published	
Fabric, textile, wallpaper, carpeting, floor tile, wrapping paper, yard goods (if applied to three-dimensional work, see below)	1 complete copy (or swatch) showing design repeat and copyright notice, if any	1 complete copy (or ID material if work has not been fixed in repeat)
Fabric emblems or patches, decals or heat transfers (not applied to clothing), bumper stickers, campaign buttons	1 complete copy	1 copy or ID material
Greeting cards, picture postcards, stationery, business cards, calendars	1 complete copy	1 copy or ID material
Holograms	1 actual copy if image is visible without aid of machine or device; otherwise 2 sets of display instructions and 2 sets of ID material showing displayed image	1 copy or display instructions and ID material of image
Maps or cartographic material	1 copy of CD-ROM if work published in that format; otherwise, 2 complete copies	1 copy of CD-ROM if work fixed in that format; otherwise, 1 complete copy or ID material
Patterns, cross-stitch graphs, stitchery brochures, needlework and craft kits	1 complete copy	1 copy or ID material
Pictorial or graphic works ( <i>For example:</i> artwork, drawings, illustrations, paintings)	2 complete copies	ID material
Pictorial or graphic works fixed only in machine-readable form	ID material	1 copy or proof, photocopy, contact sheet
Posters, photographs, prints, brochures, exhibition catalogs	2 complete copies	
"Limited edition" posters, prints, or etchings (published in quantities of fewer than 5 copies, or 300 or fewer numbered copies if individual author is owner of copyright)	1 copy or ID material	
Oversize material (exceeding 96" in any dimension)	ID material	ID material

<b>Nature of Work: Three-Dimensional</b>	<b>Published</b>	<b>Unpublished</b>
Artwork or illustrations on 3-D objects (For example: artwork on plates, mugs)	ID material	ID material
Fabric or textile attached to or part of 3-D object (such as furniture)	ID material	ID material
Games	1 complete copy if container is no larger than 12" × 24" × 6"; otherwise, ID material	1 copy if container is no larger than 12" × 24" × 6" or ID material*
Globes, relief models, or relief maps	1 complete copy, including stand (ID material <i>not</i> acceptable)	1 complete copy or ID material*
Jewelry	ID material or 1 copy if fixed only in form of jewelry cast in base metal not exceeding 4" in any dimension	same as published
Pictorial matter and/or text on box or container that can be flattened (contents of container are not claimed)	1 copy of box or container if it can be flattened or 1 paper label	1 copy or ID material*
Prints or labels inseparable from 3-D object (For example: silk screen label on a bottle)	ID material	ID material
Sculptures, toys, dolls, molds, relief plaques, statues	ID material	ID material
Sculpture (For example: doll) in box with copyrightable pictorial and/or textual material; claim in sculpture and artwork/text	ID material for sculpture plus 1 copy of box and any other printed material	ID material for sculpture plus copy of box or ID material*
Oversize material (exceeding 96" in any dimension)	ID material	ID material

\* Because storage space is limited, the Copyright Office prefers ID material rather than a copy in these cases.

<b>Nature of Work: Architectural</b>	<b>Unconstructed Building</b>	<b>Constructed Building</b>
To be eligible for copyright protection, architectural works must have been created on or after December 1, 1990, or have been unconstructed and embodied only in unpublished drawings as of that date. (See Circular 41, <i>Copyright Claims in Architectural Works</i> , for more information.)	1 complete copy of architectural drawing or blueprint showing overall form of building and any interior arrangement of spaces and/or design elements in which copyright is claimed	1 complete copy as described at left plus ID material in form of photographs clearly identifying the architectural work being registered