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## How to Prevent Theft of Your Ebooks – Part 1: Ebook Copyright

By Michael Hopkins

### How to Prevent Theft of Your Ebooks – Part 1: Ebook Copyright by Michael Hopkins

While the majority of web users are honest people, you must accept that some people WILL try their best to steal your products.

For this reason, it's important that you take some measures to ensure that your product isn't being illegally copied and/or distributed.

In this article (the first of two on this subject) I'll look at the issue of copyright protection.

In part two I'll be looking at practical measures you can take to prevent people from accessing your download pages or passing your ebook on to others

#### ESTABLISHING YOUR COPYRIGHT

This information is intended to act as an introduction to the concept of copyright. Please be aware that I'm not a legal expert. If you've any doubts regarding copyright then you should seek legal advice.

Copyright is the name given to the protection of your 'right to copy' a published work.

When you own the copyright to a work, you've the right to reproduce any number of copies of that work in any way you choose. You can also grant copy rights to others.

Once you create a published work, your copyright to that work applies automatically. You do not need to formally register your copyright in order for your copyright of that work to legally exist. In fact, you do not even need to place a copyright statement on the work.

Having said that, it's still a good idea to formally register your copyright.

In the event that someone has stolen your work, having registered your copyright may entitle you to claim for compensation from the offender. If you haven't formally registered the work, then legally seeking compensation can be much more difficult.

For a closer examination of this important point, read this article by Mark Levine:  
[http://www.clickandcopyright.com/why\\_copyright.htm](http://www.clickandcopyright.com/why_copyright.htm)

### THE MINIMUM YOU SHOULD DO

If you are hesitant about paying fees to register your copyright, then there are still other measures you can take to make sure that the world knows who owns your work (you should follow these steps EVEN if you DO register copyright).

You should include your copyright statement at the bottom of every page of your book (and your website and everything else you create).

Including a copyright statement is no guarantee that your work will not be stolen. It's also no assurance that you'll be able to recover royalties or loss of earnings from someone who infringes your copyright.

However, it stamps the work as being yours. It makes it clear to those who might be tempted to copy it, that they don't have that right.

Example of a copyright statement...

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All rights reserved worldwide.  
No part of this e-book may be copied or sold.

Note: Some people use (c) (the letter 'c' in brackets) instead of the official copyright symbol © (the letter 'c' surrounded by a circle). In many countries the law does not recognize this as

a copyright symbol and it's not a given that a court will accept it as valid. You should ALWAYS write the word 'Copyright' in FULL as part of your copyright statement and you should use the official copyright symbol.

You should also include a copyright page in your e–book. Take a look at the copyright information in any e–book (or paper book) for ideas on what you should include on this page.

Another idea that may be useful – in a legal sense – is to print out a copy of your e–book on paper and save a copy on to a diskette (or CD–ROM).

Place both the paper version and the diskette in an envelope and mail it to yourself via REGISTERED mail. Hold on to the receipt for the mail and when the package arrives to your home, put it away in a SAFE place (together with the receipt) WITHOUT opening it.

This is proof that you had the document in your possession at the date of the mailing. If you do this before your e–book goes

'live' then you're sure that nobody can have copied your work before this date.

Here are a few websites where you can learn more about copyright issues...

–The Publishing Law Center: <http://www.publaw.com>

–The Copyright Website: <http://www.benedict.com>

Okay, I hope that this has helped you understand the question of copyright a little better. In the next article, I'll continue on the question of ebook protection by looking at practical measures you can put in place to prevent people from stealing your ebook from your website.

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## **The rhyme and reason behind ebooks**

**By Farida Madre**

To everything there is rhyme and reason

So your thinking, why ebooks?

## How to Prevent Theft of Your Ebooks – Part 1: Ebook Copyright

First of all let's explain what an ebook is. An ebook is a downloadable, electronic digital version of information or a book. These digital versions are also sometimes referred to as etexts. The etext versions are usually text versions.

An ebook can come in several formats. The two most popular formats are listed below

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Now the answer to the question "Why Ebooks?"

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- Ebooks are inexpensive to create. There are many software creators that can be purchased for \$30 or less.

What are some of the disadvantages?

Some formats of ebooks do not run on all computer systems. Especially the executable files. They sometimes may not run on Mac systems.

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