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COPYRIGHT BASICS

Definition of Copyright

Q1: *What is a copyright?*

A1: A copyright is the legal and exclusive right granted to an author, composer, or publisher to publish and sell a literary, musical, dramatic, or artistic creation (called a *work* in copyright law).

The meaning of the term *copyright* might be somewhat confusing in its present application, but is clearer when viewed in historical context. When the nation's first copyright law was enacted in 1790, it dealt solely with the right to make copies (copyright: literally, the right to copy) of books, maps and charts. During the 200-plus years that followed, copyright law experienced numerous enhancements and total rewrites in an attempt to address new concepts and technologies.

Q2: *Specifically, what kind of works can be copyrighted?*

- A2:
- Literary works
 - Musical works (compositions) including words (lyrics)
 - Dramatic works, including any accompanying music
 - Pantomimes
 - Choreographic works
 - Pictorial, graphic, and sculptural works
 - Motion pictures and other audiovisual works
 - Sound recordings
 - Architectural works

Why Copyrighting Is Important

Q3: *What rights are granted by copyright law?*

A3: Often referred to as a *Bundle of Rights*, five exclusive rights pertaining specifically to music are as follows:

- The right to *reproduce* (make copies of) the work in printed or recorded form
- The right to prepare works *derived* from the copyrighted work