



Pseudonyms

FL-101

An author of a copyrighted work can use a pseudonym or pen name. A work is pseudonymous if the author is identified on copies or phonorecords of the work by a fictitious name. Nicknames and other diminutive forms of legal names are not considered fictitious. Copyright does not protect pseudonyms or other names.

If you write under a pseudonym but want to be identified by your legal name in the Copyright Office's records, give your legal name and your pseudonym on your application for copyright registration. Check "pseudonymous" on the application if the author is identified on copies of the work only under a fictitious name and if the work is not made for hire. Give the pseudonym where indicated.

If you write under a pseudonym and do not want to have your identity revealed in the Copyright Office's records, give your pseudonym and identify it as such on your application. You can leave blank the space for the name of the author. If an author's name is given, it will become part of the Office's online public records, which are accessible by Internet. The information cannot later be removed from the public records. You must identify your citizenship or domicile.

In no case should you omit the name of the copyright claimant. You can use a pseudonym for the claimant name. But be aware that if a copyright is held under a fictitious name, business dealings involving the copyrighted property may raise questions about its ownership. Consult an attorney for legal advice on this matter.

Works distributed under a pseudonym enjoy a term of copyright protection that is the earlier of 95 years from publication of the work or 120 years from its creation. However, if the author's identity is revealed in the registration records of the Copyright Office, including in any other registrations made before that term has expired, the term then becomes the author's life plus 70 years. ©

Copyright Office fees are subject to change. For current fees, please check the Copyright Office website at www.copyright.gov, write the Copyright Office, or call (202) 707-3000.