

Term of copyright protection under Myanmar's Copyright Law: How long?

Knowing the duration of copyright protection ensures compliance with the law, helping to avoid unintentional infringements that could lead to legal disputes, penalties, or loss of rights. It also informs users about when a work enters the public domain and can be used without permission. For creators and copyright owners, understanding the duration of protection is essential for planning how to exploit their works commercially.

The term of copyright protection is provided as per Article 17 of [Myanmar's Copyright Law](#), even for works that are not registered. Under Myanmar's Copyright Law and the copyright laws of many other jurisdictions, the protection periods for economic rights and moral rights are different.

Economic rights protection period

Economic rights give the copyright owner the exclusive right to use their work in various ways (such as reproducing, distributing, or adapting the work) and to authorize others to do the same, often in exchange for compensation. The protection period for [economic rights](#) typically has a finite duration, which varies depending on the type of work and other factors:

Type of Work	Term of Protection	Calculation Start Date
Individual works	Life of the author + 50 years	January 1 of the year following the author's death
Works made by two or more authors together (joint authorship)	Life of the last surviving author + 50 years	January 1 of the year following the author's death
Cinematographic or Audiovisual Work	50 years from public availability or creation	January 1 of the year following the author's death
Work Published Anonymously or Under a Pseudonym	50 years from public availability (identity revelation changes terms)	January 1 of the year following the author's death
Work of Governmental Department/Organization	50 years from creation, public availability, or first publication	January 1 of the year following the author's death
Work of Applied Art	25 years from creation	January 1 of the year following the author's death

- For individual works:** The creator's lifetime plus 50 years after they pass away. This means if an author writes a book, the copyright protection lasts for their entire life and then 50 more years after their death, protecting the work for their heirs.
- For works made by two or more authors together (joint authorship):** The copyright lasts for the life of the last surviving author plus 50 years after their death. So, if two people co-write a book, the copyright protects the book until the last co-author dies, and then for another 50 years.
- For movies or audiovisual works:** These are protected for 50 years after the year the work was first shown to the public with the author's permission. If it's never shown, then it's 50 years after the work was created.
- For works published anonymously or under a fake name:** These are protected for 50 years after the year the work was first made available to the public. If the author's real identity becomes known during this time, then the copyright period changes to the author's life plus 50 years, like in point 1.
- For works created by government departments or organizations:** The copyright lasts for 50 years after the year the work was created, first made available to the public, or first published, whichever is latest.
- For works of applied art:** These are protected for 25 years from when the work was made.

Moral rights protection period

[Moral rights](#) are concerned with protecting the personal and reputational relationship between the creator and their work. These rights allow the author to claim authorship of the work, to object to any derogatory treatment of the work that might harm the author's honor or reputation, and to decide whether and how the work is published. Moral rights are inalienable and cannot be transferred or sold.

Moral Rights	Life of the author + unlimited after death	January 1 of the year following the author's death
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The author's lifetime plus forever after they die. This means that even after the economic rights have expired, the author (or their heirs) still has the right to be recognized as the creator of the work and to object if the work is changed in a way they wouldn't approve of.

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