



## The Basics of Copyright Registration

By Glenn Rutland

The preferred method for Copyright Registration of literary works is online at the **Electronic Copyright Office (eCO)**: [www.copyright.gov](http://www.copyright.gov), then go to **electronic Copyright Office**. The processing time for eCO will be governed by their workload. Registration may be made before or after publication or both. Gracestone Publishing will file the application for you which involves:

1. Filing a completed application form.
2. Paying a nonrefundable filing fee.
3. Sending a copy of the original work to US Copyright Office.

Copyright Registration is a “legal formality.” Your manuscript, or whatever you create, is protected by copyright law from the moment you create it. However, Copyright Law provides several advantages to you to encourage official registration.

1. Public record of the Copyright is vital before an infringement suit may be filed in court if the art was created in the USA.
2. Registering your Copyright within five years of publication can be used as factual evidence in a court of law. Your Copyright is proof of ownership unless the person who violates your copyright claim can prove they own the work.
3. Copyright Registration at the time of publication is important to ensure statutory damages and legal fees will be covered in court actions. Without it, a “damages” claim is limited to actual provable damages and profits lost.
4. Once the Copyright is filed, the artist can file their work with the US Customs Service to protect themselves from people from other countries stealing their work, or any part of it, and then importing it as their own original.