

## Copyright in a song

If you are a singer or songwriter it is important to know about copyright. When someone writes a song or creates an arrangement they own the copyright (sometimes called 'the rights') to that version. The copyright means that other people cannot copy it, sell it, perform it in a concert, make it available online or record it without the owner's permission or the appropriate licence. When you write a song you automatically own the copyright to it, which means that other people cannot copy your work. But just as importantly, you cannot copy other people's work, or perform it in public without their permission or the appropriate licence.

### Points to remember

- ✔ You can create a cover version of a song for an exam or other non-public performance.
- ✔ You cannot record your cover version and make your recording available to others (by copying it or uploading it to a website) without the appropriate licence.
- ✔ You own the copyright of your own original song, which means that no one is allowed to copy it.
- ✔ You cannot copy someone else's song without their permission or the appropriate licence.
- ✔ If you would like to use somebody else's words in your own song you must check if they are in copyright and, if so, we recommend you confirm with the author that they are happy for the words to be used as lyrics.
- ✔ Materials protected by copyright can normally be used as lyrics in our examinations as these are private performances under copyright law. The examiner may ask you the name of the original author in the exam.
- ✔ When you present your own song to the examiner make sure you include the title, the names of any writers and the source of your lyrics.

For further information on copyright, as well as licensing, please visit [www.mpaonline.org.uk/licensing-music-copyrights](http://www.mpaonline.org.uk/licensing-music-copyrights)