

Intellectual Property Checklist

Disclaimer: this sheet is provided only for educational purposes. It is neither complete nor necessarily current or correct. It is not intended as legal advice or to establish legal representation. Each business and its circumstances are different. Please consult the appropriate government authorities and legal counsel for information and advice for your particular endeavor.

Protect Expressions of Ideas—Copyrights

- Writings, sculptures, songs, videos, computer code
- Automatic protection but advantages to register. Inexpensive.
- Searching & registration: <https://www.copyright.gov>

Protection of Ideas Embodied in Products—Copyrights

- Utility Patents—useful aspects of products
- Design Patents—aesthetic shapes of products
- Plant Patents—new and useful plant cuttings
- Searching & registration: <https://www.uspto.gov/patents>

Business names and trademarks

- May need to register fictitious names with local governments (city, county)
 - SF Office of Small Business: (a web search may be easier than URL)
 - <https://sf.gov/departments/office-economic-and-workforce-development/office-small-business>
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- State trademark registration might be possible and desirable
 - California Secretary of State trademark office:
 - <https://www.sos.ca.gov/business-programs/ts>
- Federal trademark registration: business names, logos, brand indicators
 - US Trademarks: <https://www.uspto.gov/trademarks>

Trade Secrets

- Uniform Trade Secrets Act—California: (a web search may be easier than URL)
 - https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displayText.xhtml?lawCode=CIV&division=3.&title=1.81.5.&part=4.&chapter=&article=