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Who owns text and images made by AI: copyright in plain terms

AI in Your Business

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Who owns text and images made by AI: copyright in plain terms

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There is no single answer, because copyright law **varies from country to country and is still being settled** for AI. What can be said safely is this: in several countries, protection requires human contribution, so something generated only by the machine may not be protected; and the tool's licence tells you whether you may use the output commercially. This article is not legal advice.

The three questions that matter

Question	What to check	In practical terms
May I use what the tool created in my business?	The terms of the tool and of your plan	Many services allow commercial use, some only on paid plans. Keep a copy of the terms you accepted.
Can anyone copy what I created?	The law of your country, and how much human work is in it	If you only pressed a button, protection may be weak or absent. If you chose, edited and combined, your contribution may be protected.
Could I be infringing someone else's rights?	Whether the result resembles an existing work, brand or person	It can happen without intending to. An image that recalls a brand or an artist is the risk case.

How to reduce the risk, step by step

1. **Add work of your own.** Rewrite, choose, compose. The more of it is yours, the clearer your position and the better the text.

2. **Do not ask for "in the style of" a living person or a brand.** Nor use names of known characters or products in the request.

3 **Look for similarities before publishing.** A reverse image search for photos and illustrations; a quoted-phrase search for texts that seem familiar.

4 **Keep the trail:** the request, the tool, the date and the edits you made. It helps if anyone challenges it.

5 **In work for clients, say what you used.** If the contract speaks of originality and assignment of rights, talk about this before delivering.

On a website, the most common case is that the AI wrote a draft which you then rewrote: the final text is largely yours. The case to avoid is publishing as yours a text the machine returned almost identical to something that already exists. And do not confuse protection with exclusivity: even if something is protected, the same request made by someone else to the same tool can return something very similar.

! **Do not paste into the AI**
third-party texts, photographs or code you have no right to use, nor a client's material they have not authorised. What the tool returns does not wash the origin of what you gave it.

If someone publishes something of yours that infringes your rights, or you have been accused of doing so, the process for telling a site's host is in **reporting abuse: how to do it and what happens next**. For a serious dispute, talk to a lawyer.

NEED A HAND?

Questions about copyright on a site hosted with us? Describe the case.

Open a support ticket →

SEE ALSO

- **Making images with AI for your website: what to check before you publish** →
- **AI-written content and Google: what to watch** →
- **Reporting abuse: how to do it and what happens next** →

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