

MCPS Anti-Piracy Unit

Frequently Asked Questions



What is counterfeiting?

Counterfeiting is the unauthorised use of a copyright work (in this case music) for commercial gain. Music contains copyright for the music itself (often held by the songwriter/composer and the publisher) and the sound recording (often held by the artist and record company).

How can you tell if something is counterfeit?

Counterfeit optical discs (CD or DVD) are copies made to look like the original. The original trademarks and logos on the packaging are often reproduced. It is often easy to spot a counterfeit as they may contain more than one original album on the same disc.

What are bootlegs?

Bootlegs are unauthorised recordings of live or broadcast performances.

Are you allowed to copy your own CDs at home for personal use?

No. Any copy of music, without the relevant clearance, is an infringement of copyright and therefore illegal.

Can you make copies of your CDs if you are a DJ so you don't have to use your original CDs?

No. As stated above ANY copy of music, without the relevant clearance, is an infringement. By doing this you invalidate the PRS clearance of the venue you are playing in, as the clearance does not cover infringing music.

What happens to music pirates?

The outcome varies from case to case and depends on the severity of the crime. The maximum penalty for copyright infringement is a 10 year custodial sentence. Trademark infringement is subject to the same maximum penalty.

Is MP3 legal?

Yes as a format. However making or downloading MP3s that do not have the correct clearance or the permission of the copyright owner is illegal. Legal downloads can be purchased from approved online retailers.