

YouTube Copyright Checklist

Complete Pre-Upload Verification for Pakistani Creators

Protect Your Channel Before You Upload

This checklist helps you verify copyright compliance before publishing. Each copyright strike brings you closer to channel termination. Use this guide to catch violations before YouTube's Content ID system does.

1. Video Content Verification

Original Footage

- All video footage filmed by you or your team
- Stock footage purchased with commercial license
- Public domain video clips (pre-1928 or government)

✓ *Tip: Save license receipts for stock footage in organized folder*

Third-Party Clips

- Clips used are minimal (only what's necessary for commentary)
- Your commentary/analysis exceeds duration of borrowed clips
- Clips support criticism, review, or educational purpose
- Clips transformed through editing, analysis, or new context

■ **Warning: Reaction videos without substantial commentary get copyright claims**

Screen Recordings

- Game footage follows publisher guidelines (check developer website)
- Software demos recorded with permission or for review/tutorial
- Website screenshots are minimal and for commentary purposes
- Social media posts shown have user consent or are public figures

2. Music & Audio Verification

Background Music

- Music from YouTube Audio Library (no attribution OR attribution added)
- Music from paid service (Epidemic Sound, Artlist, AudioJungle)
- Royalty-free music with commercial license saved
- Original music composed by you or commissioned with rights transfer
- Public domain recordings (pre-1928 or verified public domain)

✓ *Tip: Test upload as 'Unlisted' first to check for Content ID claims*

Music License Documentation

- License agreement saved (screenshot or PDF)
 - Artist/track attribution added to description (if required)
 - License covers YouTube/commercial use explicitly
 - License valid for your video length and channel size
- **Warning: 'Creative Commons' still requires checking specific license type**

Other Audio Elements

- Sound effects from royalty-free libraries or YouTube Audio Library
- Voice-over recorded by you or licensed voice actor
- No TV/radio/podcast audio clips (or minimal under fair use)
- No copyrighted jingles, theme songs, or commercial music

3. Fair Use Assessment

Complete this section if using ANY copyrighted material without permission

Purpose & Character (Factor 1)

- Video is commentary, criticism, review, or parody
 - Video is educational with clear learning objectives
 - Your use is transformative (adds new meaning/message)
 - Video is not purely entertainment using copyrighted work
- ✓ *Tip: Ask 'Does my video replace need for original?' If yes, fair use is weak*

Amount Used (Factor 3)

- Used minimum amount necessary for purpose
 - Did not use the 'heart' or most memorable parts
 - Clips are short relative to your total video length
 - Original content (your commentary) exceeds borrowed content
- **Warning: No 'safe amount' exists - even 3 seconds can trigger Content ID**

Market Impact (Factor 4)

- Your video does not serve as substitute for original
- Video encourages viewing/purchasing original work
- Your use does not harm copyright owner's market
- Video targets different audience than original

Fair Use is a Legal Defense, Not a Right

You can still receive copyright claims and strikes even if you believe your use qualifies as fair use. Copyright owners can reject your fair use argument. Disputes may require legal representation. When possible, obtain permission instead of relying on fair use.

4. Images & Graphics Verification

Thumbnails & Graphics

- Thumbnail created by you or commissioned with rights transfer
- Photos are yours, stock images with license, or public domain

- Icons/graphics from royalty-free sources (Flaticon, etc.)
- No celebrity photos without permission (unless fair use commentary)
- No copyrighted logos/brand marks without permission

✓ *Tip: Canva Pro and Adobe Stock include commercial licenses*

B-Roll & Stock Footage

- Stock video from licensed sources (Pexels, Pixabay, paid stock)
- License allows YouTube monetization
- Attribution added if required by license
- No watermarked images/videos used

5. Text & Written Content

- Script written by you or licensed writer
- No copied text from articles, books, or websites (or minimal under fair use)
- Quotes properly attributed to source
- On-screen text graphics created by you
- Product descriptions rewritten (not copy-pasted from manufacturer)

6. Brand & Product Usage

Product Reviews

- Review is your honest opinion (not just promotional material)
- Product shown is yours or provided for review
- Manufacturer promotional clips used with permission OR minimal under fair use
- Brand logos shown incidentally (not as main focus without permission)

Sponsored Content

- Sponsorship agreement includes content usage rights
- Brand provided assets with permission for YouTube use
- Sponsorship disclosure added (YouTube feature + verbal mention)

7. Pre-Upload Technical Checks

Content ID Test

- Video uploaded as 'Unlisted' first for testing
 - Checked YouTube Studio for copyright claims within 1 hour
 - Reviewed any claims to determine validity
 - Resolved or removed claimed content before making public
- ✓ *Tip: Content ID scans during upload - claims appear almost immediately*

Description & Credits

- Music credits added (if required by license)
- Stock footage/image credits added (if required)
- Source links provided for cited content
- Copyright notice added if claiming original work: © 2025 [Your Name]

8. Documentation & Record Keeping

- All licenses saved in organized folder (by video project)
- Purchase receipts for stock content saved

- Permission emails/screenshots documented
- Original project files backed up (proves ownership)
- YouTube Studio copyright notices checked weekly

✓ *Tip: Create template folder: Licenses / Music / Stock / Permissions*

Quick Reference: Common Copyright Questions

Question	Answer
Can I use a song if I give credit?	NO - Credit does not grant permission
Is 30 seconds of music safe?	NO - No safe amount exists, even 3 seconds trigger Content ID
Can I use content if not monetized?	NO - Monetization status does not affect copyright
Does fair use protect reaction videos?	MAYBE - Only if substantial commentary added
Can I use movie clips for reviews?	YES - If minimal amount for criticism/commentary
Are Creative Commons songs free?	DEPENDS - Check specific CC license type

What to Do If You Receive a Copyright Claim/Strike

Copyright Claim (Content ID)

1. Review claim details in YouTube Studio
2. Options: Accept / Remove content / Dispute
3. Dispute only if you have valid grounds (permission, fair use, mistake)
4. Video stays live but copyright owner may claim revenue

Copyright Strike (DMCA Takedown)

1. Video immediately removed from YouTube
2. Cannot upload for 1 week (first strike)
3. Must complete Copyright School
4. Counter-notification available if strike is invalid
5. Consult lawyer before filing counter-notification

■ **Warning: 3 strikes in 90 days = permanent channel termination**

Helpful Resources

Free Music Sources:

- YouTube Audio Library (YouTube Studio)
- Free Music Archive (freemusicarchive.org)
- Incompetech (incompetech.com)
- Pixabay Music (pixabay.com/music)

Paid Music Services:

- Epidemic Sound (\$15-30/month)
- Artlist (\$199/year)
- AudioJungle (pay per track)

Stock Footage:

- Pexels (free)
- Pixabay (free)
- Videvo (free & paid)

YouTube Official Resources:

- YouTube Copyright Center
- Content ID Information
- Copyright School

Need Legal Help?

Qadir Chamber specializes in YouTube copyright defense for Pakistani creators.

Services:

- Copyright strike defense & disputes
- DMCA counter-notification filing
- Fair use legal analysis
- Content licensing review
- Channel protection strategies

Contact:

Phone: +92 321 4418884

Email: info@qadirchamber.com

Website: qadirchamber.com

Free Consultation Available

Disclaimer: This checklist provides general guidance and does not constitute legal advice. Copyright law is complex and varies by jurisdiction. Fair use determinations are made on a case-by-case basis. When in doubt, consult a qualified intellectual property attorney.