

# A Beginner's Guide to INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

*For centuries, intellectual property (IP) has helped inventors produce technologies and innovations that enhance our lives, communities and economies – from faster phones to better crops.*

*In the coming decades, as populations expand and new challenges emerge, IP will play an increasingly larger role in our world. Use our guide to get to know the most important facts about IP and the vital role it plays in our everyday lives.*

## WHAT IS INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY?

IP is any “creation of the mind.” Anything that you produce – from a simple piece of writing to a complex mobile phone application – is your intellectual property, and since it took your time and effort to create, you are entitled to protect it!

IP is legally protected in several different ways, allowing the people who create intellectual property to take credit or receive financial benefit from what they've produced.



## WHERE CAN I FIND IP?

From the cars we drive to the crops farmers grow to the laptops we work on, nearly everything we come across in our daily lives was made possible through IP.



## WHO CREATES IP?

Individuals, public companies of all sizes, private institutions, and the government. Every industry in the world creates IP that is protected under the law.



## HOW DO WE PROTECT IP?

**There are several legal ways that intellectual property is protected:**

### Patent

A right granted to an inventor, so he may decide how the invention can be used by others.



### Trademark

Distinguishes the goods and services of one company or enterprise from those of another.



### Copyright

Describes the rights that creator have over their works – covering books, music, art, computer programs, medicines, and so on.



### Industrial design rights

Allow a maker to prevent others from copying the unique features of her creation, like its three-dimensional shape or its two-dimensional patterns or colors.



### Geographical indications

Identifiers used on certified goods of a particular origin that possess characteristics specific to that location (such as “Kentucky bourbon” or “Basmati rice”).



## WHY ARE IP PROTECTIONS IMPORTANT?

Without tools to protect IP, anyone could use your hard work and creativity for their own benefit.

It often takes years of work and significant financial investment to turn an idea into a product. If an inventor's work is stolen, he may not be motivated to create new work and share it with others.

Without these incentives to innovate, society would miss out on the exciting – and sometimes life-changing – benefits of new inventions.

