

# Top 10 Tips – Getting to know your Intellectual Property Rights

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1. An Intellectual Property Right (IPR) is a legal right which protects an idea that has been recorded or embodied in a tangible form.
2. There are different types of IPR for protecting different aspects of a creation. They come into being in different ways, they operate in different ways, they last for different lengths of time, and they have effect in different geographical territories.
3. Identifying and applying for IPRs to 'lock in' the value of ideas is an ongoing commercial investment. Start now.
4. There are many myths in circulation and wrong assumptions made about what ideas can be protected, how ideas can be protected and how IPRs can be used to make money and to stop others using your ideas. Seek professional legal advice!
5. Keep your idea confidential until you have been professionally advised of your position regarding IPRs. Public disclosure of your idea may mean that you lose the opportunity to obtain useful legal protection for it. Follow this 'golden rule' for any new idea, whether you consider it to be totally new or a development of an earlier one.
6. Maintain clear and comprehensive records of your ideas and what has been done with them! If others have contributed to your creation, keep a copy of any contracts between you that could affect who owns the IPRs and keep contact details for them.
7. IPRs can be used in different ways for different purposes. Look into how you can manage IPRs as part of your overall strategy for making the most of your ideas.
8. Tie up each of your IPRs to parts of your business. It will help you to work out which of your IPRs are being used more than others.
9. Be careful not to falsely claim or threaten that you have IPRs for your ideas (including any invention, design, trade name or branding). By getting it wrong you could be committing an offence. You could also spoil the interest of potential investors.
10. Visit [www.ipo.gov.uk](http://www.ipo.gov.uk) for useful information and guidance that will help stay on the right track with IPRs. Call us for a free initial consultation.

## Top 10 Tips Supplied by...

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