

# Showing Films at Church

This FACT FILE has been created by CCLI as a guide to the copyright implications of showing films during church activities. If you do not find all the information you need in this FACT FILE, please visit [www.ccli.co.uk](http://www.ccli.co.uk) or contact CCLI (details overleaf).

## COPYRIGHT AND THE LAW

Pre-recorded videos and DVDs, such as those bought or rented from shops, are only intended for personal home use, not for public viewing in your church building or hall.

## FAIR DEALING

Under copyright law there are various provisions under Fair Dealing which cover the reproduction or performance of certain copyright works for education and research. However, these rights do not extend to the performance or showing of films or film scenes during church activities, regardless of the age or type of audience or the length of the film scene.

## SHOWING FILMS

Three performance rights should be considered when a film is shown. One for the film itself and two relating to music on the soundtrack. To show a film in public, therefore, requires permission from the film producer, a performance licence from PRS for Music and a performance licence from PPL.

You will need to ensure you have the appropriate copyright permission, depending on the context in which the film, or scene, is shown. For example:

- (a) **Film scenes during church services** – Many churches now include short scenes from films to act as a visual aid during a children's talk or sermon. Both PRS for Music and PPL have chosen to waive the requirement for performance licences for music played during acts of divine worship. Therefore, in order to show film scenes during Sunday services you only require permission from the film producer. A Church Video Licence is available from CCLI which includes most of the top film producers and studios.
- (b) **Film scenes in other teaching activities** – If you use film scenes at your men's breakfast meetings, youth club, or senior's club etc., these are not deemed to be acts of divine worship and therefore performance licences from both PRS for Music and PPL will be required in addition to a Church Video Licence.
- (c) **Full-length film shows for entertainment, outreach and social events** – These activities are not deemed to be acts of divine worship and therefore performance licences from both PRS for Music and PPL will be required in addition to a Church Video Licence.

NB: For information about showing film scenes obtained from the internet see 'The Church & The Internet' fact file.

Copyright is an intellectual property right given to the creators of original musical, literary and dramatic works. The Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 (CDPA) is the legislation that currently operates in the UK and provides the creator with two main rights:

- **Economic** - this allows the creator to charge anyone who wishes to copy, perform or record their work for any commercial or non-commercial use.
- **Moral** - this allows the creator to protect their work from any change which might be considered offensive or not in keeping with their wishes.

## COPYRIGHT LICENCES

Instead of contacting the film producers each time you want to show a film, you could purchase an annual Church Video Licence from CCLI which permits you to show a wide range of Christian and secular films as often as you wish throughout the year. You can also obtain a PRS for Music Church Licence and PPL Church Licence from CCLI.

Activity	Licences
Showing film scenes to illustrate children's talks or sermon points during an act of divine worship	Church Video Licence (CVL)
Showing film scenes or entire films for teaching, outreach or entertainment (but not during an act of divine worship)	Church Video Licence (CVL) PRS for Music Church Licence PPL Church Licence

If you don't want annual licences, event licences are available which include the same rights as their annual counterparts, but lasting only 14 days. Instead of the Church Video Licence, a Single Title Screening Licence (STSL) is available from Filmbank ([www.filmbank.co.uk](http://www.filmbank.co.uk)). This licence allows you to show films for one-off commercial and non-commercial use. As the name suggests, each STSL is issued on a title-by-title basis; Filmbank cannot sell an annual licence to churches. A PRS for Music Church Licence and PPL Church Licence will also be required if the film/scene is not shown during an act of divine worship.

## ADVERTISING & CHARGING

The terms of the Church Video Licence do not permit you to advertise film titles outside your church because this will be regarded as competing with any local cinemas. Furthermore, the licence is for non-commercial use only so you cannot charge people to see the film, though a free-will offering may be taken.

The STSL from Filmbank does permit you to advertise film titles and charge for entry, however the cost of your licence will reflect the numbers attending and the commercial nature of your event.

## PROGRAMMES/FILMS RECORDED FROM TELEVISION/SATELLITE/CABLE

The Church Video Licence and Filmbank STSL each cover commercially available films from an authorised list of producers. Neither of these licences covers programmes recorded from broadcast media. You must obtain permission from the programme / film producers before you can show such recordings in public.

More information about the films / producers / studios covered by each copyright licence is available here:

- CCLI - [www.ccli.co.uk/film-producers](http://www.ccli.co.uk/film-producers)
- Filmbank - [www.filmbank.co.uk/stsl](http://www.filmbank.co.uk/stsl)

The STSL from Filmbank does permit you to advertise film titles and charge for entry, however the cost of your licence will reflect the numbers attending and the commercial nature of your event.

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*The information included in this Fact File is provided for information purposes only and does not constitute legal advice. If in doubt you should consult a legal expert. Whilst CCLI aims to provide information that is accurate, CCLI accepts no responsibility for any errors or omissions in the information provided.*

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