

Pirates are everywhere. It's a sad fact but true. You'll find them on blogs, eBay, Yahoogroups and Googlegroups, file-sharing sites intended for public domain and Freedom of Information Act type files, and even pirate sites that knowingly and blatantly abuse copyright and Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA).

How do you find them?

1. Have [Google Alerts](#) looking for your author name and titles. You will sometimes find them that way.
2. Take a few hours to [Google](#) or [Clusty](#) search your name and titles every few months. Clusty is a good research site, since it does cluster searches to cut down on search times.
3. Join lists like [AuthorsAgainstE-BookTheft](#) and [AuthorsAgainstCopyrightTheft](#), EPIC lists (even if it's [EPICeWorkshop](#) list, which accepts non-members on the list), and your publisher's author lists. Watch for news about pirate sites, and check them for your own titles.
4. Some readers and other authors will contact you directly and tell you where they've seen your books being pirated.
5. Search sites that routinely have your books, monthly or so. As you've had to deal with certain ones several times, you'll know which to check.

So, you've found them. What do you do next? That depends on the situation.

For any type of infraction you find...

1. Take screen shots. You may need them.
2. Be prepared to give links, identify yourself as the copyright owner, and be ready to state what you want to have happen clearly, and gather your information (more detail on that later).
3. Let your publisher know you've found the pirate. Some publishers prefer to handle them personally. Some want you to handle them. If you're not sure if something is a pirate site that charges for books (they do exist) or a legitimate reseller, ask your publisher before you proceed.
4. DO NOT make a public announcement to reader lists. The last thing you want to do is give people who haven't already found the pirates information to find them.
5. DO pass the information along to your publisher's author groups, [AuthorsAgainstE-BookTheft](#) and [AuthorsAgainstCopyrightTheft](#) Yahoogroups, EPIC lists, and to other affected authors you see on the site. The more complaints at once, the better. Make it difficult on them.
6. Address the specific problem in some of the ways listed below.
7. Though they are fewer and farther between every year, be prepared to educate pirates that honestly don't know it's illegal. You can find a lot of good information at: [EPIC's blog](#), [IWOFA's anti-piracy page](#), and others.

If the books are being passed on a blog, contact the blog author with a cease and desist, if the blog author has an e-mail address listed. Be professional

about it...no snark. Don't expect a warm welcome. You'll get one of two responses. Either the person didn't realize it was wrong and will take the files down immediately...or the person will give you a blistering response with all the usual cop outs pirates use. In that case (or if there is no e-mail for the blog author listed), contact the blog site that hosts the blog (Blogger, LiveJournal, etc.) and report the infringement. You can ask for them to suspend the blog entirely, but they may opt to warn the blog author and remove just the post/s that are infringement.

If you find your files on eBay... If your publisher is already listed with eBay's anti-piracy program, they will contact eBay. If not, contact eBay directly via the "report item" link at the top of the listing page that contains your copyright material or on the [report page](#) at eBay. The report page is useful, if you have found several listings with the same seller.

If you find your files passing on a Yahoogroup, you'll want to choose your actions carefully. If it's a single person who did it on a list that doesn't usually pass files, contact the list owner and request for the file to be removed and the poster to be banned (as per the Yahoo TOS). You can further contact Yahoo about the individual and let them know whether or not the list owner is working with you. If, however, the list is a haven of file sharing, don't bother with the list owner; that individual is knowingly breaking the law and TOS. Go directly to Yahoo with the information that proves they are passing your files or arranging for the transfer off list of your files and request that Yahoo kill the group, the group owner's account, and the accounts of anyone you have proof is passing your books. Google groups will have a similar setup.

Sites like Scribd, that exist to pass information legally, are good about taking down pirated copies. In Scribd's case, you can file reports on individual downloads by sending an official DCMA report (see the bottom of this file) to copyright@scribd.com. Other sites will have similar contact information provided. Please note the information below about contacting sites before proceeding.

When sending the DCMA notice, you will need the following: title, author, ISBN and publication date (or web site URL, if it's a web site or blog that's being infringed on), links to the material on their sites, physical address, phone number, e-mail address, and legal name. Now, let me tell you the truth about filing these notices. There are a lot of unscrupulous sites out there, and they will injure an author, if they can. Use an e-mail address that is a throw-away. Start a gmail, Yahoo mail, or something similar to use to connect with these sites, and be prepared to ditch one that they mail-bomb and open another. Keeping a PO Box for your pen name is a good alternative to using your home address. Using something like a Skype number or a disposable cell phone number is preferable to giving out your home, work, or cell. And, don't use your legal name. If you're copyrighting the work to your pen name, the pen name is legal owner of the copyright. Use that.

Whether the site is one that exists to pass legally or not, take down the information of who is PASSING...not asking for...passing the files (because it's a heck of a lot easier to bust them for sending files illegally than those receiving them illegally), the date it was passed, the user name of who did it and any information attached to that user name (including profile information from the site and anything you can gather from [WhoIs](#), reverse e-mail search, or other sources).

Again, never expect a warm welcome, when you call a pirate or their site on breaking the law. If the files are not ultimately removed, to your satisfaction (resign yourself to the fact that they will be put back up again, there or somewhere else, and you can't stop that), you can contact the ISP (Internet Service Provider...the company someone pays for their online connection and/or their server space for a web site) the pirate uses and the site uses directly. WhoIs is good for finding the ISPs. Remember, no matter what the TOS (Terms of Service) for the site says, if the law is being broken, and they don't take action, their ISP will not like it.

Some sites exist primarily to enable illegal sharing. With these sites, it's even more important to protect yourself from the vicious attacks in return for filing reports. They make taking files (or the site) down as difficult as they can. They will often set up in foreign countries that don't support the Berne, which makes forcing their ISPs to do anything about their illegal activities impossible or nearly so. They make their sites accessible to members only and make the members only accepted when invited by current members, in the hopes that no one will infiltrate to get information to use against them. When dealing with these sites, you want to belong to groups like: [AuthorsAgainstE-BookTheft](#) and [AuthorsAgainstCopyrightTheft](#) at Yahoogroups; they may be able to help you with them, though they are notoriously difficult to make headway with.

Moreover, if you see any big names being pirated, get them on it. You can't do anything about someone else's books, but they have legal teams at the NY publishers who will send out the appropriate e-mail and/or snail mail letters to shut down pirates. Let the NY authors put their legal teams to work to all our benefit, IMO.

Official take-down letter to use with most sites sharing your work...
**see above for suggestions on protecting yourself while filing this statement

Attn: [legal department of site]

Pursuant to 17 USC 512(c)(3)(A), this communication serves as a statement that:

1. I am [the exclusive rights holder | the duly authorized representative of the exclusive rights holder] for [title of copyrighted material being

- infringed upon, along with any identifying material such as ISBNs, publication dates, etc -- or, if the material is a web page, the URL];
2. These exclusive rights are being violated by material available upon your site at the following URL(s): [URLs of infringing material];
 3. I have a good faith belief that the use of this material in such a fashion is not authorized by the copyright holder, the copyright holder's agent, or the law;
 4. Under penalty of perjury in a United States court of law, I state that the information contained in this notification is accurate, and that I am authorized to act on the behalf of the exclusive rights holder for the material in question;
 5. I may be contacted by the following methods (include all): [physical address, telephone number, and email address];

I hereby request that you remove or disable access to this material as it appears on your service in as expedient a fashion as possible. Thank you.

Regards,
[your full legal name]