

isitpirated?

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COPYWRONG**



If you can buy or download a movie before its cinema release or while it's still showing, there's a very good chance it is pirated.

If the playback quality is poor; art work and features such as trailers, commentaries, and language choice are missing; DVD covers are displayed in a folder or not at all; downloads happen via a peer-to-peer file sharing network; and there's no Australian viewing classification, such as G, PG or M, you are most likely dealing with an illegal product.

Here's a guide to some of the obvious signs that a DVD or a download is pirated.

timing

- the DVD of a movie is on sale or a file is ready to download before or at the same time it's showing at a cinema in a capital city.

shops or market sellers

- shops or stalls spring up overnight
- DVDs are not openly displayed. Only one cover is pinned up or the covers are in plastic sleeves in a folder that's kept on or under the counter
- shop fittings can be shoddy with DVDs in boxes or stacked on spindles. There can be little in the way of official promotional material such as posters and professionally produced catalogues
- DVDs are not always sold in standard-sized covers and can lack high quality, full colour artwork
- choice can be limited to mainly new releases or classics marketed as special collections, sometimes featuring two or more movies starring the same actor or from the same series
- dealings are cash only. Receipts might not be issued and there is no written refund or returns policy
- price tags don't always have retailer's name or other elements identifying the seller, and
- advertising is mainly through fliers and unsolicited emails.

online sellers

- offer user the chance to be one of the first to see a new release before it's in cinemas, legally online or authorised to be on sale as a DVD or in some other format
- can also offer an unlimited number of downloads or an unlimited timeframe in which to watch a download
- titles of movies are not always 100% accurate and can be a play on words
- quality ratings can be for the quality of the picture and sound rather than the movie itself
- official artwork from the film or the cover of the DVD is not displayed. Images of actors are not necessarily those used by studios to promote the specific title

- trailers and other related information are not downloaded from or linked to official websites
- standard internet site features such as FAQ's and terms of use don't exist or lack detail
- internet site or supplier's street address is in Asia or Europe, or is not provided
- there is no refund or returns policy coupled with a legitimate address and other contact details, and
- advertising is done mainly through unsolicited emails or links from other sites that tend to deal with other dodgy products and services.

price

- pirated movies are usually available at what might seem a low price
- some shops and internet sites offer the same title at different prices. This can reflect big variations in the quality of the product
- prices are in more than one currency, and
- wholesale rates or a discount are offered to members of the public rather than authorised resellers.

packaging

- DVDs might be sold in smaller CD-sized cases and/or soft plastic or paper sleeves
- artwork can be of poor quality or missing, particularly inside the cover
- images are not sharp, colours dull or don't match that of the official product
- printing is not always of a professional standard and can be limited to one side only on poor quality paper
- artwork doesn't always fit the cover properly
- there can be spelling mistakes, poor English expression or multiple languages
- Australian classifications such as G and PG are not displayed or are incorrect
- packaging for the same movie can look different from one DVD to the next
- there can be a lack of detail or incorrect information about the studio, distributor and copyright owner
- logos of organisations such as the distributor as well as trademarks of features such as Dolby sound can be left out or are incorrect
- the DVD can be labelled NTSC, and
- the region can be described as suitable for play in all regions, 0 region, or there is no region listed

disc

- usually contains the advertised title only with no extras such as subtitles, trailers, director's commentaries or interviews

- artwork can be of poor quality and in limited colours. It might not match the look of the rest of the packaging, can be stuck on as a sticky label or may not fit the disc properly
- there can be spelling mistakes on the label or the information can be in multiple languages
- details of copyright owner, distributor, etc are missing or wrong, as are certain codes, and
- disc is a DVD-R and is most likely blue or purple in colour on the non-label side.

playback quality

- playback quality can vary from disc to disc or download to download
- especially if it's a new release, the picture can be shaky or not clearly focused if something like a camcorder has been used to film the movie while it's screening
- colour can be inconsistent and can drop out with the picture alternating between black and white and colour
- volume and clarity of the sound can also change unexpectedly
- stereo reproduction or surround sound on home entertainment systems can be limited
- words such as 'review copy only' appear across the top or bottom of the screen

costs of piracy

Pirated versions of movies and TV programs strip at least \$230 million a year from the Australian economy. Locally, piracy also threatens the livelihood of around 50,000 people who work in jobs ranging from retail sales to driving trucks, the trades to film production.

penalties

Civil and criminal penalties for breaching copyright in Australia range from a \$1,320 on-the-spot fine to \$60,500 with a maximum of five years in prison.

Raids across the country have exposed sophisticated operations linked to organised crime. Banned and unclassified films are seized alongside mainstream releases in more than 90% of police operations.

Some people using file sharing networks to download an

unauthorised copy of a movie, such as peer-to-peer users, might not be aware their computer can become an integral part of an illegal system.

Added dangers can include an increased risk exposure to spyware, adware, viruses, worms and Trojan horses.

Resources such as memory and internet bandwidth can also be drained as personal and network computers are used by outsiders to download, upload and index illegal files.

legal DVDs and downloads

Legal DVDs and downloads are readily available from reputable retail and rental outlets as well as internet sites soon after cinema release.

Artwork, printing and packaging is of high quality as is the picture and sound.

Standard DVD releases for Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific are for region 4, use the PAL system and prominently display viewing classifications such as G and PG.

getting the ok

To get permission from a copyright owner to do things like screen a work in public or use part of it in another production:

- email Roadshow Non-Theatrical Film & Video Hire at publicperformance@roadshow.com.au or visit Amalgamated Movies at www.amalgamatedmovies.com or
- contact the organisation identified as the copyright or licence holder. This appears in places such as the back of a DVD cover, on the disc itself or in the end credits of the presentation.

for more information

- Australian Copyright Council www.copyright.org.au
- AFACT, the Australian Federation Against Copyright Theft www.afact.com.au
- Attorney-General's Department www.ag.gov.au/copyright
- Australasian Legal Information Institute www.austlii.edu.au
- ComLaw, the Commonwealth of Australia Law www.comlaw.gov.au
- Screenrights www.screenrights.org

what you can do to help protect the film and TV industry in Australia

- follow the copyright/copywrong guidelines
- report film and TV piracy at www.afact.com.au or freecall 1800 251 996, or
- call Crimestoppers on 1800 333 000.

australian federation against copyright theft

AFACT, the Australian Federation Against Copyright Theft is established to protect the film and television industry, retailers and movie fans from the adverse impact of copyright theft in Australia.

This information is subject to change without notice and exceptions do apply. It is not intended as a substitute for professional advice.