



33



United States Copyright Office

Circular

Computing and Measuring Devices

COMPUTING AND MEASURING DEVICES

Devices and similar articles designed for computing and measuring cannot be copyrighted. Common examples of uncopyrightable works are slide rules, wheel dials, and perpetual calendar designs.

Ideas, methods, systems, mathematical principles, formulas, and equations are not copyrightable, and the same is true of devices based on them. The printed material comprising a device (lines, numbers, symbols, calibrations, and their arrangement) likewise cannot be copyrighted, because this material is necessarily dictated by the uncopyrightable idea, principle, formula, or standard of measurement involved.

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