

# INTERNATIONAL STANDARD

# ISO 15707

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## Information and documentation — International Standard Musical Work Code (ISWC)

*Information et documentation — Code international normalisé des œuvres  
musicales (ISWC)*

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## Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO technical committees. Each member body interested in a subject for which a technical committee has been established has the right to be represented on that committee. International organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO, also take part in the work. ISO collaborates closely with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) on all matters of electrotechnical standardization.

International Standards are drafted in accordance with the rules given in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 3.

Draft International Standards adopted by the technical committees are circulated to the member bodies for voting. Publication as an International Standard requires approval by at least 75 % of the member bodies casting a vote.

Attention is drawn to the possibility that some of the elements of this International Standard may be the subject of patent rights. ISO shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights.

International Standard ISO 15707 was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 46, *Information and documentation*, Subcommittee SC 9, *Presentation, identification and description of documents*, in collaboration with the International Confederation of Societies of Authors and Composers (CISAC).

Annex A forms a normative part of this International Standard. Annexes B and C are for information only.

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## Introduction

The International Standard Musical Work Code (ISWC) system was developed by the member societies of the International Confederation of Societies of Authors and Composers (CISAC). CISAC's purpose in creating an ISWC for musical works is to enable more efficient administration of rights to those works on a worldwide basis. The ISWC provides an efficient means of identifying musical works in computer databases and related documentation and for the exchange of information between rights societies, publishers, record companies and other interested parties on an international level.

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# Information and documentation — International Standard Musical Work Code (ISWC)

## 1 Scope

This International Standard specifies a means of uniquely identifying a musical work. It standardizes and promotes internationally the use of a standard identification code so that musical works can be uniquely distinguished from one another within computer databases and related documentation and for the purposes of collecting societies involved in the administration of rights to such works.

The International Standard Musical Work Code (ISWC) identifies musical works as intangible creations. It is not used to identify manifestations of or objects related to a musical work. Such manifestations and objects are the subject of separate identification systems, such as the International Standard Recording Code (ISRC) for sound recordings, the International Standard Music Number (ISMN) for printed music, and the International Standard Audiovisual Number (ISAN) for audiovisual works.

Guidelines for the use of ISWC are given in normative annex A.

## 2 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this International Standard, the following terms and definitions apply.

### 2.1

#### **check digit**

added digit which may be used to verify the accuracy of a standard number through a mathematical relationship to the digits contained in that number

NOTE Adapted from ISO 7064:1983.

### 2.2

#### **musical work**

work composed of a combination of sounds, with or without accompanying text

### 2.3

#### **work**

distinct, abstract creation of the mind whose existence is revealed through one or more expressions (e.g. a performance) or manifestations (e.g. an object)

## 3 Construction of an ISWC

### 3.1 Basic construction

An ISWC consists of a prefix element followed by nine digits and a check digit, as follows:

- prefix element (1 character);
- work identifier (9 digits);
- check digit (1 digit).

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When an ISWC is written or printed, the letters ISWC shall precede it. For ease of reading only, hyphens and dots may be used as separators between the elements of the identifier.

### EXAMPLE

ISWC T-034.524.680-1

### 3.2 Prefix element

The first element of an ISWC shall be the letter "T". If necessary, the International ISWC Agency may, at its discretion, designate another alphanumeric character in place of "T" in order to expand the numbering capacity of the ISWC system and/or to indicate the beginning of a new phase in the assignment of ISWC to musical works.

### 3.3 Work identifier

The second element of an ISWC shall be the work identifier. The work identifier is a 9-digit numeric code.

Work identifiers for musical works shall be in the numeric range of 000000001 – 999999999.

### 3.4 Check digit

The third element of an ISWC shall be the check digit. The check digit of an ISWC is calculated on a weighted modulus 10.

The formula for calculating the check digit is shown in informative annex B.

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## 4 Administration

The Registration Authority for this International Standard shall be the International ISWC Agency<sup>1)</sup>.

The ISWC shall be administered by the International ISWC Agency and by other appropriate ISWC agencies appointed by the International Agency for that purpose.

## 5 Association of an ISWC with descriptive metadata

An ISWC shall be associated with descriptive data (see informative annex C) about the musical work it identifies by means of a database repository maintained by the specific ISWC agency which registered that work.

## 6 Association of an ISWC with digital content

An ISWC may be associated with digital expressions and manifestations of a musical work by employing appropriate techniques (e.g. encryption and watermarking) to facilitate tracking the use of that work.

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## Annex A (normative)

### Guidelines for the use of an ISWC

#### A.1 Works for which an ISWC may be allocated

##### A.1.1 Eligible repertoire

An ISWC may be assigned to any musical work, published or unpublished, newly created or already existing, irrespective of its copyright status.

Modified versions, excerpts and composite musical works shall be allocated an ISWC separate from the ISWC of the work(s) from which they are derived.

Examples of modified versions are as follows:

- changes to the content of a musical work, with the exception of minor alterations;
- new arrangements (e.g. a Bach Invention for Piano, arranged for chamber orchestra);
- translations of the literary text of a musical work.

Examples of excerpts are as follows:

- movements and other principal divisions of a musical work which might be known as something other than the title for the entire work (e.g. "Ode to Joy", the last movement of Beethoven's 9th Symphony);
- any work that is recognized as being an excerpt from a larger work, even though the type of excerpt may be unknown.

Examples of composite works are as follows:

- a medley consisting of existing works or excerpts of such works performed in a continuous sequence;
- a work containing samples of pre-existing works, such as a new song in which a rap lyric is sung over a rhythm track from a previously recorded work.

#### A.2 Administration of the ISWC system

##### A.2.1 International ISWC Agency

The Registration Authority for this International Standard shall be the International ISWC Agency. The International ISWC Agency shall appoint ISWC agencies for specific regions and/or sectors and shall allocate blocks of ISWC to them according to their requirements.