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# How to get a trademark licence for your business in the UAE

*There are six steps to ensure that you receive a trademark for your company in the UAE*



Registering your company's trademark in the UAE will protect your brand and ensure that no other company in your category can imitate your intellectual property. Around 70 per cent of trademarks in the UAE are owned by non-residents, showing that international entrepreneurs are keen to protect their brand image.

If you have decided you want to protect your business logo, letters, words, symbols, numerals, headings, signatures or any other trademark signs, here's how you can do it.

## Registering your trademark in the UAE in six steps

Registering your trademark in the UAE is a relatively bureaucratic process, but it is open to any company that wishes to register, as long as the trademark itself is permitted.

The following steps will give you an overview of what the process involves:

**1. Research existing trademarks:** The first step is to make sure that the trademark you're interested in isn't already in use. It's normally easiest to start with a simple online search, although there are some specialist tools like Macaria, WIPO and Trademark Engine which can also help. Once you're confident that the trademark isn't already in use, you can then begin the application process.

**2. Download and fill in your application form:** The UAE Ministry of Economy deals with trademark applications. You can begin the process online at their e-services site [here](#).

To complete the trademark application, you will need your trademark itself, as well as the following paperwork:

- Sample of trademark design (brand name)
- Power of attorney
- Trading licence
- ID or passport of person who will sign application
- List of goods and services to be protected
- Contact details of applicant

**3. Fee payment:** Once you have compiled these documents, you will need to make your trademark payment fee. This can be done online as part of the e-services process.

Payment per trademark depends on a number of factors, but costs around \$3,780 all in. The cost of an individual trademark is \$3,600, plus an additional registration fee of around \$180. If you require any legal costs or translation fees, don't forget to include these in your budget.

**4. Ministry of Economy review:** The Ministry of Economy will then review your application. If there are any problems, you may receive a rejection. You have the right to appeal, or to modify your application as required. Assuming everything in your application is correct and there are no issues, you will normally receive approval within 30 days. A UAE company set-up partner can help ensure that your application will contain all the correct information, so you don't risk a rejection.

**5. Publishing of your application in two national newspapers:** Next up, you must pay the ministry to publish the announcement of your application in two Arabic newspapers in the UAE. If a member of the public has an objection to your application, they then have 30 days to register an objection, and the Ministry will then review the objection and either reject it or notify you.

**6. Registration:** Assuming there have been no obstacles, you will then receive a certificate of your trademark registration in the UAE. The certificate will include your registration number, the date of application and registration, the trade name and the business owner's name, your trademark and a description of the products, goods and services that come under it.

Once registered, your trademark will be valid for 10 years – after which you will need to pay a fee to keep the trademark.

### **Other key information about your UAE trademark**

If you are considering applying for a UAE trademark, it's also worth bearing in mind the following points:

There are limitations on words, images and signs that can be trademarked. Your trademark must:

- Be distinctive
- Not be offensive to public morals or religion
- Not contain any public symbols such as flags
- Not contain the Red Cross, Red Crescent or similar
- Not contain any symbols of a religious character
- Not contain any names or titles of a third party
- Not contain any false statements
- Not use certain words such as 'Copyright', 'Registered', 'Concession' or similar
- Not be a direct translation of well known trademarks

More information on what is not allowed can be found here

([https://www.abudhabi.ae/portal/public/en/business/business-startup-and-operationalisation-topic/business-startup-basics/uae-trademark-](https://www.abudhabi.ae/portal/public/en/business/business-startup-and-operationalisation-topic/business-startup-basics/uae-trademark-law)

[law;jsessionid=YjizgPDVkJGGS1WN4BJ00ZoD3mO0E6HGB7AzWcTBC3I\\_NhYmTZTHg!1363140196!-589133487!1532019929301](https://www.abudhabi.ae/portal/public/en/business/business-startup-and-operationalisation-topic/business-startup-basics/uae-trademark-law?jsessionid=YjizgPDVkJGGS1WN4BJ00ZoD3mO0E6HGB7AzWcTBC3I_NhYmTZTHg!1363140196!-589133487!1532019929301)).

Your trademark will only be protected in the UAE. The UAE is not a signatory of the Madrid convention which allows you to protect a trademark internationally.

Therefore your trademark will not be protected outside of the country. On the other hand, the UAE is a signatory of the Berne Convention, which protects international copyright.

Essentially, this means that you cannot copy trademarks or any other protected intellectual property created by individuals or companies outside of the UAE.

What happens if someone infringes on my UAE trademark? If you notice that another company is using your trademark or a very close imitation, the first step is simply to contact them formally to let them know they are infringing your trademark. If they refuse to change their practices, contact the Ministry of Economy's trademark department who will follow up the case. Penalties include confiscation of goods, fines of at least Dhs5,000 and even imprisonment.

### **Keeping your signs, style and symbols safe**

A trademark is a useful tool for keeping your brand and intellectual property protected. While in the UAE the process is a little bureaucratic, it's worth the effort to make sure no one infringes on your brand's identity.

**Olga Melnik is head of Business Development at Virtuzone**

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