

United Kingdom

And elsewhere? The rules, country by country

AUTHORITIES AND PROCEDURES

England/Wales: venue license or TEN, unless exempted. Scotland: cinema license or local exemption.

RECENT FILMS

Distributor availability.

KEY POINT

TEN: Maximum 499 people, including staff. Does not apply in Scotland.

FILM RIGHTS

Filmbankmedia license by title and by screening, valid for free or paid outdoor screenings; an annual ambient license does not constitute an event authorization. Availability, temporary withdrawals and special permissions are set by the studios; no one-year deadline.

MUSIC

Filmbankmedia refers to PRS for Music for suitable music coverage; it is verified separately.

SESSION AUTHORIZATION

England and Wales: premises licence covering the projection, or Temporary Event Notice — up to 499 people present simultaneously, staff included, maximum seven days, at least ten clear working days' notice, annual ceilings per applicant and per site. Scotland: TEN does not apply; cinema licence or exemption decided by the local council.

YOUNG AUDIENCE AND SPECIAL FEATURES

Conditional exemption for certain non-profit screenings in community venues — between 8 a.m. and 11 p.m., maximum 500 spectators, manager's approval, age classifications respected — which is neither a general outdoor exemption nor a waiver of film rights. Classifications and admission conditions are part of the file.

In detail

The authorization of rights holders is independent of the venue authorization. Filmbankmedia offers a license per title and per screening, usable notably for free or paid outdoor screenings. An annual ambient broadcast license should not be confused with this event authorization. Availability, temporary withdrawals and special permissions remain determined by the studios. There is no general one-year deadline specific to outdoor screenings.

Sources :

- [Filmbankmedia — Single Title Screening Licence](#)
- [Filmbankmedia — Catalogue and availability restrictions](#)

In England and Wales, projection may constitute a regulated activity under entertainment licenses. It must be

verified that the venue has a premises license covering the activity, or use a suitable procedure. For a one-off event, the Temporary Event Notice may be suitable for up to 499 people present simultaneously, including staff, and for a maximum of seven days. The normal procedure requires at least ten clear working days' notice. Annual ceilings also apply to the applicant and the site.

Sources :

- [GOV.UK — Entertainment Licensing](#)
- [GOV.UK — Temporary Event Notice](#)

Some non-profit screenings in community venues benefit from an administrative exemption under certain conditions, notably between 8 AM and 11 PM, with a maximum of 500 spectators, the consent of the person in charge, and compliance with age classifications. This is not a general exemption for all outdoor cinemas with fewer than 500 people. It does not exempt from film rights.

Sources :

- [Thurrock Council — Exemptions for screenings](#)

In Scotland, the TEN does not apply. The local authority determines the cinema license or relevant exemption. You must present the venue, programming, audience, and occasional nature of the activity. Film classifications and admission conditions are also part of the file. Music licensing is checked separately with the competent authority, particularly PRS for Music.

Sources :

- [West Lothian Council — Cinema Licence](#)
- [Regional Screen Scotland — Licences and exemptions](#)
- [Filmbankmedia — Questions about licenses and music rights](#)

Common rules: three authorizations not to be confused

Film rights

Public screening of a protected work requires the consent of the rights holders, except where applicable legal exceptions apply. This consent must be obtained from the producer, distributor, or an authorized representative for the territory concerned. Purchasing a DVD, renting a file, or subscribing to a streaming service does not, in itself, grant the right to screen the film to the public. Free admission, non-profit status, or cultural objectives do not constitute a general exemption.

Sources :

- [GOV.UK — Showing films and TV shows in public](#)
- [U.S. Copyright Office — 17 USC, chapter 1 \(§ 106, right of public performance\)](#)
- [MPLC Italy — Outdoor Screenings](#)

Administrative authorization

It concerns the event, the venue or the operator's activity. A film license does not reserve a park and is not permission to receive several hundred people. Conversely, an agreement with the town hall does not transfer any projection rights. The exact scope depends on the country and, often, the competent authorities.

Music rights

They may require a separate procedure. This is particularly the case with SACEM in France, GEMA in Germany and SIAE in Italy. You need to check what the contract actually covers: the music incorporated in the film, the welcome music and any possible concert are different uses. Filmbankmedia also refers its British clients to PRS for Music for appropriate music coverage.

Sources :

- [CNC — Non-commercial screening, common provisions](#)
- [GEMA — Rate T](#)
- [SIAE — Film and audiovisual screenings](#)
- [Filmbankmedia — Questions about licenses and music rights](#)

Preparing a screening: decisions that prevent blockages

Define the project before booking the rights

Prepare a form indicating the country, municipality, site, organizer status, main date and fallback date, expected audience, film, language, format, entry-level price and partners. This data enables the distributor and administration to respond to a specific event.

Distinguish legal deadlines from processing deadlines

The French visa timeframe, the Spanish timeframe applicable to administrations, and the British TEN notice period do not have the same purpose. Planning several weeks of preparation is an organizational recommendation, not a universal legal deadline. A regional commission or a local permit may require a longer lead time.

Obtain a written agreement covering the outdoors

Specify the number of screenings, the territory, the authorized medium, advertising, revenue to be declared, and postponement conditions. An annual license, authorization for another country, or conditions from a partner cinema do not automatically apply to a new event.

Sources :

- [Filmbankmedia — Single Title Screening Licence](#)
- [Swank — Conditions for parks and recreation, booking and postponement](#)

Site preparation and operation

Have the gauge, circulation, emergency access, electrical installations, sanitary facilities, accessibility and noise levels validated according to applicable regulations. For the screen, request the installation, anchoring or weighting instructions and weather limits from the provider. Define who will monitor conditions and decide to interrupt the session. No single wind threshold can be given for all screens and all sites.

Sources :

- [Bari Municipality — Event file, technical documents and safety of temporary installations](#)
- [San Diego — Special Events, event preparation](#)
- [ADA National Network — Accessible Temporary Events](#)

Establish a budget and divide responsibilities

Separately plan film rights, potential music rights, site rental, technical aspects, insurance, security, communication, and applicable taxes. In the service contract, identify who reserves the film, declares the event, checks ages, manages ticket sales, and handles cancellations. A distributor's rates do not constitute a national legal scale.

The absence of a comparable authorization to the CNC does not therefore mean a lack of regulation. The relevant comparison concerns the actual project: recent or catalog film, free municipal screening or paid exploitation, already equipped venue or temporary installation. Official sources set the framework; local authorities and rights holders specify the conditions of the specific case.