FSK Ratings on Optical Media and their Packaging

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1. General Information

These instructions illustrate the statutory rating of optical media with films and their packaging. We have tried to cover the majority of optical media and the different ways of packaging available today.

The regulations of the size and positioning of the ratings on optical media and their packaging are stipulated by the first Amendment Act of the Protection of Young Persons Act (Jugendschutzgesetz JuSchG), effective from July 1st, 2008, in § 12, Sub-Clause 2, JuSchG:

“Labelling codes according to Sub-Clause 1 should be clearly visible on the surface of data media and on its cover. The label of at least 1,200 mm² shall be applied to the front surface of the cover, bottom left, and to the image medium in the size of at least 250 mm². The following steps may be taken, in this context, by the supreme state authority:

1. Instructions on content, size, form, colour and fixation of codes.
2. Exceptional permissions regarding fixation of ratings to optical media surfaces or cover.”

Here you find a download of the complete Protection of the Young Persons Act as a PDF file.

In practice, the correct interpretation of these legal regulations raises a number of questions. The examples used in these instructions have been chosen in concert with the Ministry of Education, Science, Youth and Culture of the Federal State of Rhineland-Palatine as the Highest Authorities supreme of the Federal States in charge.

We should like to thank Universal Pictures for permitting us to use their artwork for the purpose of visualization. The illustrations are to be regarded as templates.

They do not necessarily depict actual products. We hope that these instructions answer your questions regarding the statutory rating of optical media with films and their packaging.

Wiesbaden, March, 2010

Christiane von Wahlert
Managing Director of the FSK

Stefan Linz
Spokesperson for the Film and Video Industry at the FSK
The age ratings imposed by the FSK in a joint procedure with the Highest Authorities supreme of the Federal States are statutory ratings. They are under copyright protection. It is a punishable offence to misuse them. As specified in § 14, Sub-Clause 2, JuSchG, there are the following ratings:

- Freigegeben ohne Altersbeschränkung (Released for general audiences, without age restriction)
- Freigegeben ab sechs Jahren (Released for audiences as of six years of age)
- Freigegeben ab zwölf Jahren (Released for audiences as of twelve years of age)
- Freigegeben ab sechzehn Jahren (Released for audiences as of 16 years of age)
- Keine Jugendfreigabe (Restricted to audiences below 18 years of age)

The ratings look as follows:

**Rating 250 mm²**

![Rating 250 mm²](image1)

**Rating 1,200 mm²**

![Rating 1,200 mm²](image2)
2. The FSK Ratings

Please note, the FSK ratings are registered by the German Patent and Trademark Office and are protected by trade mark law. The application of the ratings to optical media and their packaging is permitted only, if the content has been rated accordingly by the FSK.

2.1 Design and Technical Specifications

The FSK ratings must be applied to all publications of optical media with films that are to be made accessible to children or adolescents in public. The following requirements for the application of the ratings to optical data and their packaging must be met under § 12, Sub-Clause 2, JuSchG:

Optical media (disc):
Size: at least 250 mm²
(1.58 cm x 1.58 cm)
Position: integration into the printed area

Packaging:
Size: at least 1,200 mm²
(3.46 cm x 3.46 cm)
Position: front side, bottom left

The rating can be integrated into the print copy (it need not be integrated into the artwork); alternatively, the rating can be applied to the case or the cover with a permanent sticker (non-dischargeable without assistive equipment). If the colour design of the background blocks out the square contour of the rating, it has to be optically delineated, e.g., by a frame.

For optical media smaller than 2,000 mm², the rating may be reduced to a size of ca 144 mm². If the distributor proves that for technical reasons this kind of rating is not feasible, an exception to this regulation may be made.

For optical media smaller than 1,500 mm² and for the colour design, the Highest Authorities supreme of the Federal States can permit further exceptions (cf. 2.4 Exemptions).
2. The FSK Ratings

2.2 Notice Before the Feature Film

All publications of optical media with films should indicate the legal bases and contentual importance of the ratings by means of an insert before the feature film which cannot be skipped, concluding a link to the FSK homepage.

The text of the insert is as follows:

2.3 Rating of Information or Educational Programmes

Distributors of films or film programmes for information, instruction or teaching purposes may mark their products “Infoprogramm” (informational programme) or “Lehrprogramm” (educational programme) if they are clearly harmless to children or adolescents (§ 14, Sub-Clause 7, JuSchG).

The size and positioning of these ratings is subject to the same specifications as the ones for the FSK ratings. Downloads are also available here:

Download of the print copies:

- Exemplary print copies for the ratings “Infoprogramm” (informational programme) and “Lehrprogramm” (educational programme)
- Further information on the design of the ratings “Infoprogramm” (informational programme) and “Lehrprogramm” (educational programme)

Downloads are also available at: www.fsk.de/ratings
2.4 Exemptions

A deviating labelling can only be granted if an exceptional permission is applied for in accordance with § 12, Sub-Clause 2, Phrase 2, JuSchG, at the Highest Authorities supreme of the Federal States in charge. The informal application should contain a sample of the intended labelling. Electronically stored samples will be accepted if the finished product is clearly evident.

The applications for exceptional permissions are to be addressed to:

Ministerium für Integration, Familie, Kinder, Jugend und Frauen
Referat 743
Kaiser-Friedrich-Straße 5 a
55116 Mainz
Germany
E-Mail: ruth.ohlmann@mifkjf.rlp.de
3. Optical Media: DVD / Blu-ray / CD

Please note: these are sample illustrations! The actual FSK age ratings may differ.

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FSK Ratings on Optical Media and their Packaging

4. Plastic Cases

4.1 With Paper Sleeve

FSK rating printed on paper sleeve together with cover artwork.

Alternatively, the FSK rating is fixed to the paper sleeve or the plastic case as a permanent sticker.

Please note: this applies to all DVD and Blu-ray cases.

Please note: these are sample illustrations! The actual FSK age ratings may differ.
4. Plastic Cases

4.2 With Several Discs - Example 1 of 2

Plastic Case (spine breadth varies) for Several Optical Media (discs)
Each disc must be labelled with the approved FSK rating. The FSK rating with the highest age rating of all the discs must be printed on the paper sleeve together with the cover artwork.

Alternatively, the FSK rating may be fixed to the paper sleeve or the plastic case as a permanent sticker.

Please note: this applies to all DVD and Blu-ray cases.
4. Plastic Cases

4.2 With Several Discs - Example 2 of 2

Plastic Case (spine breadth varies) for Several Optical Media (discs)
Each disc must be labelled with the approved FSK rating. The FSK rating with the highest age rating of all the discs must be printed on the paper sleeve together with the cover artwork.

Alternatively, the FSK rating may be fixed to the paper sleeve or the plastic case as a permanent sticker.

Please note: this applies to all DVD and Blu-ray cases.

Please note: these are sample illustrations! The actual FSK age ratings may differ.
4. Plastic Cases

4.3 With Reversible Paper Sleeve

The FSK rating is printed on the paper sleeve together with the cover artwork. The reverse of the cover may show the cover artwork without the FSK rating.

Alternatively, the FSK rating is fixed to the paper sleeve or the plastic case as a permanent sticker.

Please note: this applies to all DVD and Blu-ray cases.
5. Cardboard Slipcover

Example 1

Cardboard Slipcover (DVD format)
The FSK rating is printed on the cardboard slipcover together with the cover artwork.

Alternatively, the FSK rating is fixed to the cardboard slipcover as a permanent sticker.

Please note: this applies to all DVD, Blu-ray, and CD optical media.
5. Cardboard Slipcover

Example 2

**Cardboard Slipcover (CD format)**

The FSK rating is printed on the cardboard slipcover together with the cover artwork.

*Alternatively*, the FSK rating is fixed to the cardboard slipcover as a permanent sticker.

*Please note*: this applies to all DVD, Blu-ray, and CD optical media.
6. Hardcover / Digipaks

Example 1 of 2

**Hardcover/Digipaks**
The FSK rating is printed on the hardcover/digipaks together with the cover artwork. The hardcover/digipak contains the optical media.

Alternatively, the FSK rating is fixed to the hardcover/digipak as a permanent sticker.

Please note: this applies to all DVD and Blu-ray hardcover/digipaks.

Please note: these are sample illustrations! The actual FSK age ratings may differ.
6. Hardcover / Digipaks

Example 2 of 2

Hardcover/Digipaks with Several Discs
The FSK rating with the highest age rating of all the discs must be printed on the hardcover/digipaks together with the cover artwork. The hardcover/digipak contains the optical media.

Alternatively, the FSK rating is fixed to the hardcover/digipak as a permanent sticker.

Please note: this applies to all DVD and Blu-ray hardcovers/digipaks.

Please note: these are sample illustrations! The actual FSK age ratings may differ.
7. Jewel Cases

7.1 With Paper Inlay

The FSK rating is printed on the paper inlay together with the cover artwork.

Alternatively, the FSK rating is fixed to the paper inlay or the jewel case as a permanent sticker.

Please note: this applies to all DVD, Blu-ray, and CD optical media.
7. Jewel Cases

7.2 With Reversible Paper Inlay

The FSK rating is printed on the paper inlay together with the cover artwork. The reverse of the paper inlay may show the cover artwork without the FSK rating.

Alternatively, the FSK rating is fixed to the paper inlay or the jewel case as a permanent sticker.

Please note: this applies to all DVD, Blu-ray, and CD optical media.
7. Jewel Cases

7.3 Several Discs in One Jewel Case - Example 1 of 2

If one packaging includes an optical media disc and a disc containing soundtracks, the optical media disc has to be labelled with the approved FSK rating. The FSK rating is printed on the paper inlay together with the cover artwork.

Alternatively, the FSK rating is fixed to the paper inlay or the jewel case as a permanent sticker.

Please note: this applies to all DVD, Blu-ray, and CD optical media.
7. Jewel Cases

7.3 Several Discs in One Jewel Case - Example 2 of 2

Each disc must be labelled with the approved FSK rating. The FSK rating with the highest age rating of all the discs must be printed on the paper inlay together with the cover artwork.

Alternatively, the FSK rating is fixed to the paper inlay or the jewel case as a permanent sticker.

Please note: this applies to all DVD, Blu-ray, and CD optical media.
8. Special Packaging (Metal, Wood, Fabric, etc.)

8.1 Standard Packaging

The FSK rating is printed on the special packaging together with the cover artwork.

Alternatively, the FSK rating is fixed to the special packaging (e.g., SteelBook) as a permanent sticker.

Please note: this applies to all varieties of DVD and Blu-ray special packaging (e.g., SteelBook).

Illustration: SteelBook
The FSK rating is printed on the metal.
8. Special Packaging (Metal, Wood, Fabric, etc.)

8.2.1 DVD Cardboard Slipcover **Before** Special Packaging in Cellophane

The FSK rating is printed on the cardboard slipcase with the cover artwork. The cardboard slipcase has to contain the optical medium. The special packaging requires no FSK rating if the cardboard slipcase is before the special packaging and both are wrapped up together in cellophane.

**Alternatively**, the FSK rating is fixed to the cardboard slipcover as a permanent sticker.

**Please note**: this applies to all varieties of DVD and Blu-ray special packaging.

**Illustrations:**
**Velvet Special Packaging with Cardboard Slipcase**

- *background*: velvet special packaging without FSK rating
- *foreground*: cardboard slipcase with FSK rating printed on it, both wrapped up in cellophane together

*Please note: these are sample illustrations! The actual FSK age ratings may differ.*
8. Special Packaging (Metal, Wood, Fabric, etc.)

8.2.2 DVD Cardboard Slipcover **After** Special Packaging in Cellophane

The FSK rating is printed on the cardboard slipcase with the cover artwork. The cardboard slipcase has to contain the optical medium. If the cardboard slipcase is after the special packaging, which is wrapped up in cellophane, a removable sticker with the approved FSK rating on the special packaging or on the cellophane is sufficient.

Alternatively, the FSK rating is fixed to the cardboard slipcover, which contains the optical medium, as a permanent sticker.

**Please note:** this applies to all varieties of DVD and Blu-ray special packaging.

**Illustrations:**
*Wooden Special Packaging with Cardboard Slipcase*

background: cardboard slipcase with FSK rating printed on it
foreground: wooden special packaging, both wrapped up in cellophane together. The FSK sticker is on the cellophane wrapping.
9. Packaging with Slipcase / O-Ring

9.1 With a Plastic Case in Cellophane

Slipcases and o-rings which contain the plastic case with the optical medium do not necessarily need a printed FSK rating if the plastic case is marked as specified in chapter 4.

In this case, the FSK rating may be attached in the shape of a removable sticker to the slipcase/ o-ring or the cellophane wrapping.

Slipcase Wrapped in Cellophane
The FSK rating can be fixed to the cellophane wrapping or on the slipcase/ o-ring as a removable sticker.

Slipcase with the Cellophane Wrapping Removed
The slipcase does not require a printed-on FSK rating. The paper sleeve in the plastic case has to be marked according to the regulations in chapter 4.

Please note: these are sample illustrations! The actual FSK age ratings may differ.
9. Packaging with Slipcase / O-Ring

9.2 With Several Plastic Cases in Cellophane - **Example 1 of 2**

Slipcases and o-rings which contain several plastic cases with optical media do not necessarily need a printed FSK rating if the plastic cases are marked as specified in [chapter 4](#).

In this case, the FSK rating (with the highest age rating of all optical media) may be attached in the shape of a removable sticker to the slipcase/o-ring or the cellophane wrapping.

**Slipcase with Cellophane Wrapping**

The FSK rating with the highest age rating may be attached in the shape of a removable sticker to the slipcase/o-ring or the cellophane wrapping.

**Slipcase with the Cellophane Wrapping Removed**

The slipcase does not require an FSK rating printed on it. The paper sleeves in the plastic cases have to be marked as specified in [chapter 4](#).
9. Packaging with Slipcase / O-Ring

9.2 With Several Plastic Cases in Cellophane - Example 2 of 2

Slipcases and o-rings which contain several plastic cases with optical media do not necessarily need a printed FSK rating if the plastic cases are marked as specified in chapter 4.

In this case, the FSK rating (with the highest age rating of all optical media) may be attached in the shape of a removable sticker to the slipcase/o-ring or the cellophane wrapping.

Slipcase with Cellophane Wrapping
The FSK rating with the highest age rating may be attached in the shape of a removable sticker to the slipcase/o-ring or the cellophane wrapping.

Slipcase with the Cellophane Wrapping Removed
The slipcase does not require an FSK rating printed on it. The paper sleeves in the plastic cases (here: slimcases) have to be marked as specified in chapter 4.

Status: March, 2010

Please note: these are sample illustrations! The actual FSK age ratings may differ.
9. Packaging with Slipcase / O-Ring

9.3 With a Digipak (with Packaging Look) and Several Discs in Cellophane (cf. 9.4)

If the slipcase/o-ring contains a digipak with packaging-like artwork on its front side, the FSK rating has to be printed on the front side of the digipak.

In this case, the digipak with the optical media does not need to have an FSK rating printed on it. The FSK rating with the highest age rating of all optical media may be attached in the shape of a removable sticker on the slipcase/o-ring or the cellophane wrapping.

Alternatively, the FSK rating is fixed to the front of the digipak as a permanent sticker.

Please note: this applies to all varieties of DVD and Blu-ray packaging with slipcase/o-ring.
9.4 With a Digipak *(without Packaging Look)* and Several Discs in Cellophane

Slipcases and o-rings which contain a digipak with an optical medium need an FSK rating printed on them if the front side of the contained digipak comes without packaging-like artwork (e.g., no title, no information on the cast). In this case, the FSK rating with the highest age rating of all optical media has to be printed on the slipcase/o-ring.

*Alternatively,* the FSK rating is fixed to the front of the slipcase/o-ring as a permanent sticker.

*Please note:* this applies to all varieties of DVD and Blu-ray packaging with a slipcase/o-ring.
10. Box Sets in All Shapes and Sizes

10.1 With Optical Media Packaging (and Supplements) - Example 1 of 3

A box set with supplements and a optical media packaging can be marked with the FSK rating as follows:

1. with removable FSK sticker right on the box set or a possible cellophane wrapping (no illustration) or ...

2. with the FSK rating printed on a paper band or an onsert (paper sheet) fixed to the front on the box set (cf. illustration).

The optical media packaging contained in the box set has to be marked as specified in chapters 4 to 9. (Illustration: the paper sleeve of the plastic case bears the printed FSK rating - cf. 4)

Please note: this applies to all varieties of DVD and Blu-ray box sets.
10. Box Sets in All Shapes and Sizes

10.1 With Optical Media Packaging (and Supplements) - Example 2 of 3

A box set with supplements and an optical media packaging can be marked with a FSK rating as follows:

1. with a removable FSK sticker attached right to the box set or a possible cellophane wrapping (cf. illustration) or ...

2. with the FSK rating printed on a paper band or an onsert (sheet of paper) fixed to the front on the box set (no illustration)

The optical media packaging has to be marked as specified in chapters 4 to 9 of these instructions. (Illustration: the FSK rating is on the single disc digipak with packaging look - cf. 6)

Please note:
this applies to all varieties of DVD and Blu-ray box sets.
10. Box Sets in All Shapes and Sizes

10.1 With Optical Media Packaging (and Supplements) - Example 3 of 3

A box set with several supplements and several plastic cases with optical media can be marked with FSK rating as follows:

1. with a removable FSK sticker attached right to the box set or a possible cellophane wrapping (cf. illustration) or ...

2. with the FSK rating printed on a paper band or an onsert (sheet of paper) fixed to the front on the box set (no illustration).

The optical media packaging has to be marked as specified in chapters 4 to 9 of these instructions. (Illustration: FSK rating is printed on the SteelBook - cf. 8.1)

Please note:
this applies to all varieties of DVD and Blu-ray box sets.
10. Box Sets in All Shapes and Sizes

10.2 With Several Forms of Optical Media Packaging (and Supplements)

A box set with several supplements and several plastic cases with optical media can be marked with FSK rating as follows:

1. with a removable FSK sticker attached right to the box set or a possible cellophane wrapping (cf. illustration) or ...

2. with the FSK rating printed on a paper band or an onsert (sheet of paper) fixed to the front on the Box Set (no illustration).

All optical media packaging contained in the box set has to be marked as specified in chapters 4 to 9. (Illustration: FSK ratings are printed on the paper sleeves of the broad plastic cases - cf. 4)

Please note: this applies to all varieties of DVD and Blu-ray box sets.
11. Credits

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Design, technical implementation and translation
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