DRM Multi-Stack Readiness Checklist (2026)

Widevine, FairPlay, PlayReady, and CENC — one A4 page for your packaging and license-server kickoff

Companion to article 5.6 of Block 5. Walk it before signing the multi-DRM contract. (c) 2026 Fora Soft

1. Coverage matrix — which DRM reaches which device

DRM	Platform reach	Top security level	License protocol
Widevine	Android, Chrome, most Smart TVs	L1 (TEE hardware)	HTTPS Protobuf
FairPlay	iOS, iPadOS, macOS, tvOS, Safari	Hardware (mandatory)	SPC/CKC via Apple
PlayReady	Windows, Xbox, Smart TVs, set-tops	SL3000 (TEE)	HTTPS XML

2. Packaging readiness (CMAF + cbcs is the 2026 default)

- [ ] Encoder emits H.264 or HEVC or AV1 fragmented MP4 with even GOP boundaries (every 2 seconds).
- [ ] Packager produces CMAF segments with the cbcs protection scheme, not legacy cenc CTR.
- [ ] One encrypted segment set on origin; separate HLS .m3u8 and DASH .mpd manifests reference it.
- [ ] Three pssh boxes embedded per file: Widevine, PlayReady, FairPlay system IDs.
- [ ] Key IDs (KIDs) are 16-byte random values, distinct per title, never reused across catalogues.

3. License server and DRM-as-a-Service contract checks

- [ ] Vendor supports all three DRMs from one origin without re-packaging (EZDRM, BuyDRM, Castlabs, Axinom).
- [ ] Pricing model documented: per-license fee, monthly platform fee, and live key-rotation overage clause.
- [ ] License server runs in your viewers' region; expected first-license latency under 500 ms.
- [ ] Token authentication uses short-lived JWTs (5-minute exp), bound to user and session, single-use replay protection.
- [ ] Persistent (offline) license issuance configured for mobile apps that download titles.

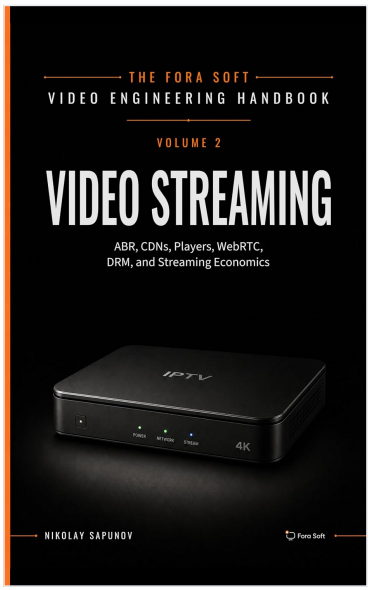
4. Security-level matrix (studio-driven, non-negotiable)

Content tier	Widevine level	PlayReady level	FairPlay	HDCP minimum
UGC / ad-funded	L3 OK	SL2000 OK	Software-OK	None or 1.x
HD subscription	L1 req.	SL2000+	Hardware	HDCP 1.4
4K UHD / HDR	L1 req.	SL3000 req.	Hardware	HDCP 2.2+
Early-window film	L1 + token-binding	SL3000 + DCP	Hardware	HDCP 2.3

5. Pre-flight before launch

- [ ] Playback verified on Chrome desktop (Widevine L3), Android phone (L1), iPhone (FairPlay), Edge Win11 (PR), Samsung Tizen TV (PR).
- [ ] License-request burst test: simulate 10x peak concurrent viewers; vendor's API does not throttle.
- [ ] Key rotation tested on live channel; player handles license refresh mid-stream without rebuffer.
- [ ] Offline download test: license issued, content plays under airplane mode, license expires per policy.
- [ ] 4K rendition refuses to play on devices that report software-DRM session (L3 / SL2000).
- [ ] Studio compliance review signed off on packaging scheme, security levels, and HDCP enforcement.

Companion to: 'DRM and Packaging for Protected Delivery: Widevine, FairPlay, PlayReady, CENC'
www.forasoft.com/learn/video-encoding/articles/drm-packaging-widevine-fairplay-playready-cenc



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