

Introduction

Patents are national government protection for inventions. This protection prevents others from creating, using, or selling an innovation for 20 years. Patents must be new, valuable, and not obvious to others in the same field to be granted by a Patent Office.

1. **Usefulness/Utility** - The invention must be functional and useful. A machine must work properly and a chemical must be active.
2. **Novelty** - The invention must be unique, not previously published, and not publicly used or sold.
3. **Non-obviousness/Ingenuity** - The invention must be a development or improvement that would not be obvious to personnel with average technological skills.

Newness and non-obviousness are tested against what was publicly known before the innovation, as demonstrated in patents and other publications. This public knowledge is "prior art."

Patent and Trademark Offices

- Canadian Patents Database (CIPO): Canadian patent records from 1869 and full-text documents from 1920 to the present.
- United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO): US patents from 1790, full-text available from 1976 to the present.
- European Patent Office (EPO): Espacenet: International patent database.
- World Intellectual Property Office: WIPO is the global forum for intellectual property services, policy, information and cooperation.



Free Online Resources

PatentScope (WIPO): It includes over 73 million patent documents: PCT and national/regional collections, AI-based developed-in translation tool, chemical structure search and CLIR that finds synonyms search terms and translates everything into 13 languages.

The Lens: Australia, European, United States, and WIPO patent documents.

Google Patents: U.S. patents in pdf format from 1790 to the present.

Step by Step Guides:

USPTO

IP Leaders

