



PATENTS

What Is a Patent?

A patent is an exclusive right granted for an invention, which is a product or a process that provides, in general, a new way of doing something, or offers a new technical solution to a problem.

Source: World Intellectual Property Office. *What is a patent?* Retrieved June 18, 2010, from http://www.wipo.int/patentscope/en/patents_faq.html#patent

What Are Patents Important?

Patents legally identify inventions as belonging to the inventor. Patents are useful:

- If you have a unique invention and want to ensure no one appropriates your idea.
- To ensure your idea is original – that is, no one else has already invented it.
- Can provide information not available in traditional scholarly literature.

Obtaining a Copy of a Patent

Patents are not collected by the Sexton Library but many are available on the Web. Patents that are not available on the Web may be ordered using Document Delivery Service.

Directory of Intellectual Property Offices

<http://www.wipo.int/directory/en/urls.jsp>

Browse a comprehensive list of international patent offices to find their web sites and/or contact information.

Search for a Canadian Patent

Canadian Patent Database (1869–Present)

<http://patents.ic.gc.ca/cipo/cpd/en/introduction.html>

- Titles, inventors and issue dates are available for all patents.
- Images are available for claims, descriptions and drawings for patents filed after 1920.
- Cover pages and abstracts are available for patents filed after 1975.
- Full text searching is available for patents filed after 1978.

Search for an American Patent

Google Patents (1790–Present)

<http://www.google.com/patents>

This site is updated weekly from USPTO data.

- Images of each patent are available in PDF and JPEG formats.
- Full text is available for all patents. However, the full text for patents before 1976 was obtained using a computer program and is not always accurate.

Compendex (1790–Present [US]; 1973–Present [EU])

Compendex on Engineering Village also lets you search U.S. and European patents. This database can be accessed using the Dalhousie Library website.

You can get to databases in a number of ways, but the fastest is to search for Compendex on the Library's database search page:

<http://www.library.dal.ca/Find/?find=databases>

Select **Compendex on Engineering Village**, and you will be linked to the main page.

Search for a European/WIPO Patent

European Patent Office (1827–Present)

<http://ep.espacenet.com/>

To search the EPO choose one of the three databases in the drop-down menu.

- The **European Patent database** contains applications (with page images) published over the last 24 months.
- The **Worldwide database** contains patents older than 24 months: date coverage differs by country.
- The **WIPO (World Intellectual Property Office) database** includes any patent published by the WIPO in the last 24 months.

Full text searching and images of each patent are generally available.

More Help?

Did you know that there is someone at the **Library** with specialized information skills in your area of study?

This is your **Subject Specialist**, and he/she is here to **help you get a better understanding of the resources you need to succeed** at Dalhousie University.

To find out who your subject specialist is, or for help with this and other databases, contact a **Librarian**:

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