Do A Prior Art Search Before Filing Your Patent

What is Prior Art?

Prior Art refers to scientific and technical information that exists before the effective date of a given patent application.

Prior art may include:

• Previous patents
• Trade journal articles
• Publications (including data books and catalogs)
• Trade shows
• Brochures
• Public discussions (conference and seminar)
• Products, devices & equipments

Why search for Prior Art?

Prior Art will help you to:

• Understand your competition
• Avoid patent infringement
• Write your patent application
• Learn more about your field of invention
• Save the cost of patenting process

Where to search for Prior Art?

1. United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO)
   http://www.uspto.gov/patft/index.html
   • Covers issued and published U.S patents from 1970

2. European Patent Office (EPO)
   http://ep.espacenet.com/
   • Contains patents from all over the world

3. Intellectual Property Office of Singapore
   www.surfip.gov.sg

4. The Industrial Property Digital Library (Japan Patent Office)
   http://www.ipdl.inpit.go.jp/homepg_e.ipdl

5. Patent Cooperation Treaty Application (PCT)
   http://www.wipo.int/pctdb/en/search-adv.jsp
   • Contains published PCT applications dating back to 1978

How to Search for Prior Art?

An on-line prior art search can be done by a keyword search

Keyword search

• List the keywords that you would use to describe the invention
• Think of all possible aspects of the invention and choose keyword that describe each aspect
• The quality of a keyword search will depend on the appropriateness of keywords selected