

## Patent Searching

### How Do I Conduct Patent Searches?

Patents, just as publications in specialist journals, provide insights into the scientific environment of your area of work/interest. The information content of both forms of publication is equal and there is often no overlap of information. The difference between patents and scientific publications is their purpose: Patents pursue an economic purpose.

### Brief Overview of Key Information:

The Office of Technology Transfer regularly conducts patent searches and offers trainings. Seminars for individual departments are available on request.

For searching patent information, there are a number of patent databases available world wide. All databases offer query interfaces similar to those you use for literature searches. Data fields by which patents can be searched include publication number, applicant, inventor, and title (keywords). You will be provided with a resulting hit list of documents with links to the complete bibliographic data of these documents. In addition, the pages of the documents are available in facsimile PDF format. The user is also provided with detailed online help functions. Since there is an 18-months retention period between the filing and the publication of a patent, the up-to-dateness of the databases is accordingly. Below you find several search possibilities that are available free of charge on the World Wide Web.

- [DEPATISnet](http://www.depatismet.de) (<http://www.depatismet.de>)  
DEPATISnet is a service offered by the German Patent and Trademark Office (DPMA) facilitating online searches about patent publications (approx. 28 million patent documents in their original layout) from all over the world contained in the data files of the DPMA's patent information system DEPATIS.
- [esp@cenet](http://ep.espacenet.com/) (<http://ep.espacenet.com/>)  
The European esp@cenet is a free patent database of EPO and the national European Patent Offices. In addition to the data contained in DEPATIS, the database facilitates searches of international patent specifications published in English after 1970.
- [USPTO Web Patent Databases](http://patft.uspto.gov/) (<http://patft.uspto.gov/>)  
The US Patent and Trademark Office offers a database in which users can access full texts and drawings, literature lists and abstracts of all US patents granted since January 1, 1976.

Sources where you can also search for patent information at a charge include Chemical Abstracts and STN.