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Search



Everything you need to know before you start

What can the Espacenet service do for you?

You can use Espacenet to

- > watch new technologies emerge,
- > find solutions to your technical problems,
- > get a sneak preview of what your competitors are developing,
- > machine-translate patent documents using the Patent Translate feature.

What's in Espacenet?

Espacenet gives you access to

- > nearly 90 million patent documents – most of them patent applications rather than granted patents – from around the world. Patent applications normally represent the first publication of a new idea, appearing ahead of journal articles and before new products reach the market.
- > patent family information, telling you if similar patents have been claimed in other countries.
- > legal status information, helping you find out whether and in what countries a patent is in force.
- > references to other kinds of technical literature (non-patent literature).
- > citations – other documents cited by or citing the document you are looking at.
- > links to the European Patent Register for European and Euro-PCT documents and to selected national patent registers.
- > links to the file wrapper for Chinese, Japanese and Korean patent applications.

What is a patent?

A patent is a legal title which protects a technical invention for a limited period. It gives the owner the right to prevent others from exploiting the invention in the countries for which it has been granted.

Patents are published so that everyone can benefit from the information they contain.

What does a patent document look like

Patent documents consist of

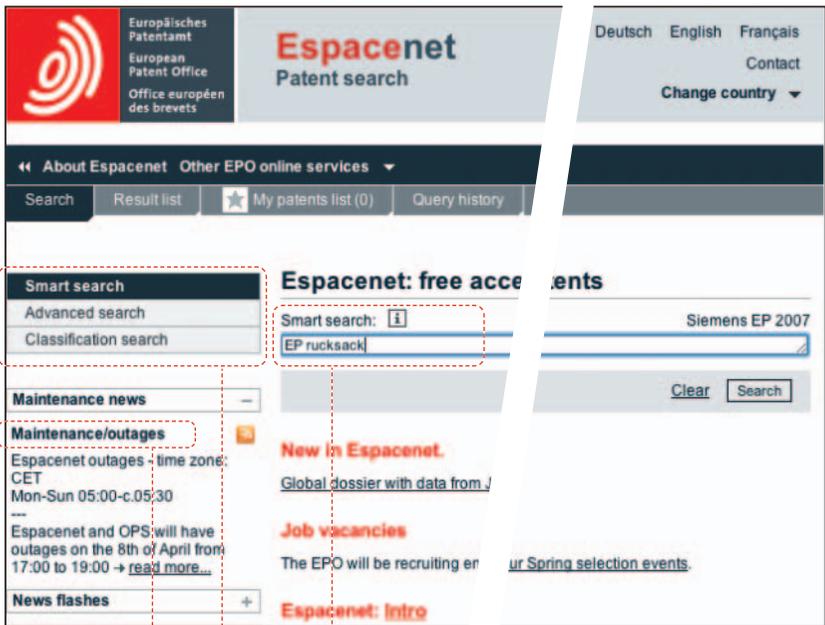
- > a first page comprising basic “bibliographic” information, such as the title of the invention and the name of the inventor, as well as the application number and date, etc,
- > a detailed description of the invention, indicating how it is constructed, how it is used and what benefits it brings compared with what already exists,
- > claims, defining the scope of protection sought,
- > drawings,
- > and, sometimes, a search report listing the documents found by a patent office when considering the patentability of the invention.

Getting started

Start by going to www.epo.org/espacenet.

You can choose whether you wish to access the service via the EPO, the European Commission, or one of the national patent offices. You can do this via the “change country” function on the right-hand side of the screen.

In this brochure we have used screenshots from the EPO server. The URL to remember for this is www.epo.org/espacenet which will direct you automatically to the Espacenet worldwide database at <http://worldwide.espacenet.com>.



For most patent searches, the **Smart search** is the best option.

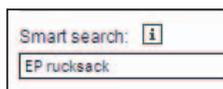
Further search options are available on the left-hand side of the screen.

Subscribe to the **Maintenance/outages** feed to get up-to-date information on outages.



Smart search

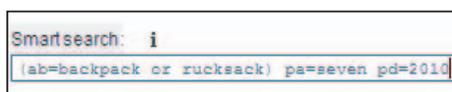
The Smart search box lets you enter either simple single-word or multi-word searches, or more complex search commands.



All you have to do is to enter a word or words describing the type of invention you're looking for and click on Search.

Alternatively, you can type in the number of a patent document, the name of an inventor or company or the date or year of a patent document.

You do not need to know the exact format of the number – fuzzy logic takes care of that.



For more experienced users, Smart search also

accepts command line searches. The query language that Smart search understands is CQL (Contextual Query Language).

You can use Boolean operators (AND, OR, NOT, etc.). The online help function provides advice on how to formulate queries.

The table at the end of this leaflet lists the various commands you can use with Smart search.

Other search options

Advanced search can be used if you want to combine various search terms. For example, you can search for patent documents from a particular year and country that have specific words in their title or abstract.

Classification search is the option to use if you are interested in finding all the patent publications in a particular technical area – a powerful tool used by professional patent searchers, it can take a bit of time to get used to, but it is usually worth the effort.

You can find detailed information on the Cooperative Patent Classification scheme used in Espacenet at www.cpcinfo.org.

Result list

Whichever search method you choose, your search will produce a result list like the one shown here.

You can switch between the extended view and the compact view by clicking here.

This feature allows you to download the result list in CSV or MS-Excel format.

The screenshot displays the Espacenet Patent search interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the Espacenet logo and language options (Deutsch, English, Français). Below this is a search bar and a menu with options like 'About Espacenet', 'My patents list', 'Query history', 'Settings', and 'Help'. The main content area is titled 'Result list' and shows search filters (All (0/25), Compact, Export (CSV | XLS)) and a download button. The search results are sorted by 'Upload date' in 'Descending' order. The results table has the following columns: Document number, Inventor, Applicant, CPC, IPC, Publication info, and Priority date. The first three results are highlighted with a star icon. The fourth result, 'Rucksack, with straps', is highlighted with a red dashed box. The fifth result is 'Rucksack, such as a hydration rucksack'.

Document number	Inventor	Applicant	CPC	IPC	Publication info	Priority date
1. LINEAR MOTION DRIVE SYSTEM FOR A RUCKSACK TYPE ELEVATOR	KOCHER HANS	INVENTIO AG (CH)	CPC: B66B11/0307	IPC: B66B	Publication info: HK1110292 (A1) 2012-09-28	Priority date: 2006-02-08
2. CABLE ELEVATOR WITH A DRIVE PLATE	ACH ERNST (CH)	INVENTIO AG (CH)	CPC: B66B11/0045 B66B11/08 B66B2/027	IPC: B66B11/00 B66B11/04 B66B11/08 (+2)	Publication info: MY120786 (A) 2009-11-30	Priority date: 1997-12-23
3. Rucksack	ROSENKRANZ STEFAN (DE) KIRSCH CHRISTOPH (DE)	SALEWA GMBH SPORTGERAETEFAB (DE)	CPC: A45F3/08	IPC: A45F3/08	Publication info: EP 2594155 (A1) 2013-09-22	Priority date: 2011-11-15
4. Rucksack, with straps	CHAPUIS SERGE (FR) BOLLARD JEAN-YVES (FR)	GALOMON SAS (FR)	CPC: A45F3/047	IPC: A45F3/04	Publication info: EP 2548803 (A1) 2013-01-16 EP 2548803 (B1) 2014-08-27	Priority date: 2011-07-13
5. Rucksack, such as a hydration rucksack						

Just click on the title of a document to see more detailed information about it.

Click on the ★ if you want to add a document to your “My patents list”, for easy, one-click retrieval at a later date.

Need more help?

Online help

Use “Quick help” on the left of the screen for answers to the most frequently asked questions. Detailed information is available via the “Help” button in the main horizontal menu near the top of the screen. Contact the helpdesk via the “Contact” button.

Espacenet Assistant

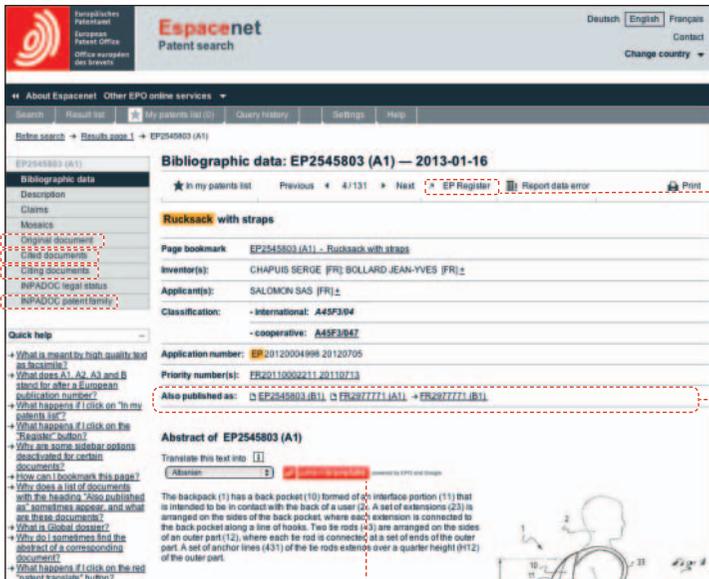
To learn more about Espacenet use the **Espacenet Assistant** at www.epo.org/espacenet-assistant

Espacenet forum

Users help users at www.epo.org/forums.

Espacenet can give you a valuable overview of the state of the art, but if you need an in-depth search, it's advisable to seek help from a patent information professional.

Looking at a patent document



Click to reveal a full list of the patent family members linked to this document by at least one priority.

This feature shows other patent applications in which this document has been cited.

Documents cited by the patent office as describing the closest known inventions to the one in the application.

Click on "Original document" to look at the patent document in PDF (where available).

Patent documents with the same priorities (usually applications for the same invention filed with other patent offices).

Click to open the corresponding record in the respective patent register (for a limited number of countries only).



The Patent translate feature provides machine translations of abstracts, claims and descriptions from English to other languages and vice versa.



Print the current page of the document.

Save/open the full document as a PDF file.

Click on "Maximise" to open the document in a separate, larger window.



Whenever you see the Global Dossier button, you can access the complete correspondence between the applicant and the patent office (available for Chinese, Japanese, Korean and US files).

Smart search field identifiers

Field identifier	Description	Example
in	Inventor	in= smith
pa	Applicant	pa=siemens
ti	Title	ti=mouse trap
ab	Abstract	ab=mouse trap
pr	Priority number	pr=ep20050104792
pn	Publication number	pn=ep1000000
ap	Application number	ap=jp19890234567
pd	Publication date	pd=20080107 or pd="07/01/2008" or pd=07/01/2008
ct	Citation / cited document	ct=ep1000000
cpc	Cooperative Patent Classification	cpc=A61K31/13
ipc	IPC (current and previous versions)	ipc=A63B49/08
ia	Inventor or applicant	ia=Apple or ia="Ries Klaus"
ta	Title and abstract	ta=laser printer
txt	Title, abstract, inventor and applicant	txt=microscope Zeiss
num	Application, publication and priority number	num=ep1000000
cl	IPC and CPC	cl=C10J3

Smart search operators

Operator	Description	Example
Boolean operators		
AND, OR, NOT	The default operator is AND. Left has precedence over right. No operator has precedence by default.	(ta=seat AND ta=belt) OR (ta=seatbelt)
Truncation		
?	One or no wildcard characters.	telephone? (for telephone or telephones)
#	One wildcard character.	telephone# (for telephones)
*	Any number of wildcard characters.	play* (for play, plays, player, playback, etc.)
Proximity operators		
prox/distance<x	Finds words within x words of each other.	mouse prox/distance<3 trap
prox/unit=sentence	Finds words within a sentence.	mouse prox/unit=sentence trap
prox/unit=paragraph	Finds words within a paragraph.	mouse prox/unit=paragraph trap
prox/ordered	Finds words in a given order.	ia=Apple prox/ordered ia=Corp The system will retrieve documents having "Apple Corp" but not "Corp Apple".
Comparison operators		
=	Equal to.	pa=siemens
==	Exactly equal to (in the order shown).	ia=="Mason Henry"
all	Finds all terms (no particular order).	ti all "paint brush hair"
any	Finds any of the terms entered.	ti any "motor engine"
within	Within a date range.	pd within "2005 2006" or pd within "2005, 2006"
>=	Greater than or equal to, i.e. on or after a certain date.	pd >=2005 will retrieve documents published in 2005 or later.
<=	Less than or equal to, i.e. on or before a certain date.	pd <=2005 will retrieve documents published in 2005 or earlier.
String search		
" "	Search on exact expression	"seat belt"

Any more questions?

Contact our helpdesk: patentinformation@epo.org

Where to get additional help

Visit our website www.epo.org

- > Patent search at www.epo.org/espacenet
 - > European Patent Register at www.epo.org/register
 - > Online filing services at www.epo.org/online-services
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 - > Quick access to FAQs, publications, forms and tools at www.epo.org/service-support
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