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## Information and search

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The following information is available on our website:

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### Central customer care and services

Phone, write to or visit Central customer care and services for information on

- procedural and legal status data
- filing routes and procedural steps
- initial consultation for inventors by a patent attorney

## Fees (excerpt)

### Patents

application fee for paper filing (including up to ten claims)	60 euros
extra fee for each additional claim	30 euros

application fee for online filing (including up to ten claims)	40 euros
extra fee for each additional claim	20 euros

examination request (no patent grant without examination)	350 euros
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Annual fees have to be paid as from the third year after the filing date.

### Utility models

application fee (including a term of protection of three years)	40 euros
registration without examination of novelty and inventiveness	

application fee for online filing	30 euros
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### Trade marks

application fee (for three classes of goods and/or services including a term of protection of ten years)	300 euros
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application fee for online filing	290 euros
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extra fee for each further class of goods and/or services	100 euros
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### Registered designs

single application (including a term of protection of five years)	70 euros
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application fee for online filing	60 euros
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multiple application (up to 100 designs in one application) for each design	7 euros
minimum fee	70 euros

application fee for online filing per design	6 euros
minimum fee	60 euros

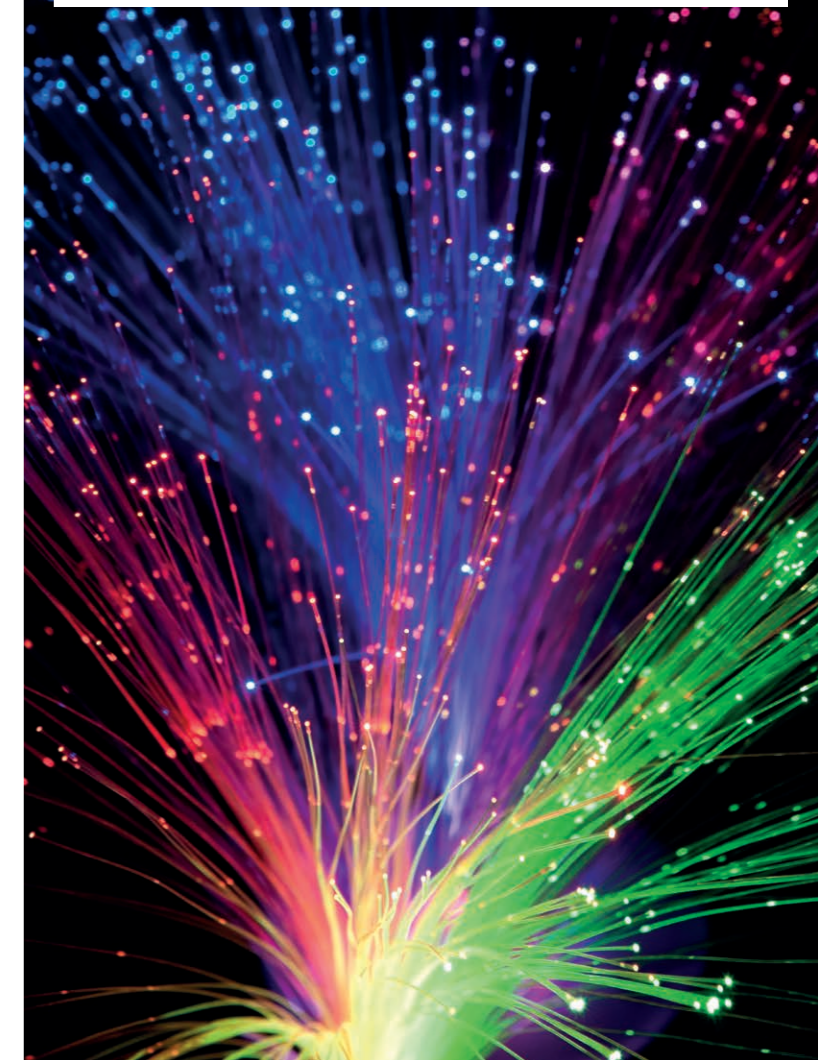
The leaflet "Information Concerning Costs, Fees and Expenses" contains a detailed list of the fees charged by the DPMA. You can obtain free copies from the enquiry unit. It is also available on our website [www.dpma.de/english/](http://www.dpma.de/english/).



German Patent  
and Trade Mark Office

# Industrial Property Rights

at a Glance



## Patents

### Add value to technical inventions

Technical inventions can be protected by patents if they are new anywhere in the world, involve an inventive step and are capable of industrial application.

The patent is an industrial property right which gives the patent owner the exclusive right to exploit an invention within a period of up to 20 years. No other person may, without the owner's consent, use the patented invention, that means manufacture, offer for sale, put on the market or import products protected by the patent or use patented processes.

Patents can be granted for inventions from all fields of technology. However, patent protection is not available for, among other things:

- mere discoveries,
- scientific theories,
- mathematical methods,
- plans, rules and methods for performing mental acts,
- business activities such as organisation schemes,
- computer programs as such.

To obtain patent protection, an application must be filed with the German Patent and Trade Mark Office (DPMA). It must contain a comprehensive description of the invention so that a person skilled in the art can understand it and carry it out. The examination as to patentability will be carried out when a request for examination has been filed with the German Patent and Trade Mark Office and the examination fee has been paid.

## Utility models

### Easy, low-cost and fast protection for inventions

Technical inventions which are new and industrially applicable can be protected by a utility model right if they involve an inventive step.

Utility models are available for almost all fields of technology for which patent protection is available, with the exception of processes (such as manufacturing or working processes).

Similar to a patent, a utility model gives its owner the right to exclude unauthorised persons from using the invention for up to ten years.

Utility model applications must be filed in writing with the German Patent and Trade Mark Office together with a description of the invention. Since, contrary to a patent, the subject matter of a utility model application is not examined for novelty and inventiveness, the applicant can obtain a registered utility model within a few weeks against payment of a small fee.

A detailed examination covering all requirements for protection will only be carried out if a third party challenges the utility model by filing a request for cancellation. If you wish to assess the validity of your utility model in advance, you can request us to conduct a payable search and ascertain the relevant publications.

## Trade marks

### Badges of origin, labels of quality, advertising signs

As a rule, a trade mark is used to identify the goods and/or services of an enterprise. Signs suitable for distinguishing goods and/or services of an enterprise from those of other enterprises can be protected as trade marks. These can be, for example, words, letters, numbers, images, but also colours, holograms, multimedia signs and sounds. The term of protection of a trade mark is ten years. It can be renewed indefinitely.

A trade mark can only be registered if there are no absolute grounds for refusal. Signs are excluded from protection, for example, if they lack any distinctiveness or if they merely describe the goods or services concerned (for example, the word "apple" for the goods "fruits"). In those cases, there is no right to registration even if the trade mark has already been recorded in the trade mark register in this or a similar form. A decision is taken in each individual case solely on the basis of the law. The registration of the trade mark confers an exclusive right to its owner, who can prohibit third parties from using an identical or similar sign, likely to cause confusion, in respect of identical or similar goods or services. Where applicable, the owner may claim damages. After publication of the registration of a trade mark, owners of earlier trade marks may file a notice of opposition within a period of three months. If the opposition is successful, the later trade mark will be cancelled.

## Registered designs

### Protection of the visual features of a product

Registered designs protect the outward appearance of two-dimensional or three-dimensional articles. Protection is available for shapes, patterns and/or colour configurations of products (for example, textiles and furniture).

When a design has been registered, the applicant has the exclusive right to use the registered design. They can prohibit third parties from using it without their consent. They alone are entitled to manufacture, offer for sale, put on the market, export, import or use the product in which the registered design is incorporated or to which it is applied.

The application for registration must include a photographic or other graphical representation of the design. Up to 100 designs may be combined in one application even if they belong to different classes of goods.

Designs protection will only come into effect if the design is new and has individual character at the time of filing the application. The design will be entered in the Designs Register without examination of the novelty and individual character criteria. These requirements for protection will only be examined in invalidity proceedings before the DPMA or in infringement proceedings before a court.

Designs protection becomes effective on the date of entry of the design in the designs register. Protection can be maintained for up to 25 years from the application date.