7 Step Patent Search Strategy

4. Search for related patents and applications by classification and sub-classification. Record all relevant patent numbers.

Advanced search

- Select the collection you want to search in.
- Enter your search terms. CTRL-ENTER expands the field you are in.
- CPC (classification)
- IPC

5. Access patents and applications by clicking on the ‘Original document’ tab on the left toolbar. Review all relevant patents and applications, including:
- Claims
- Specifications
- Drawings

7 Step Patent Search Strategy

6. When reviewing patents, look for the ‘also published as’ heading.

Also published as: GB2481247 (B)

This heading only appears in the Bibliographic data tab for inventions that have patents and/or applications in different countries.

7. To find other relevant patents, review:
- Cited documents
- Citing documents
- International Patent Documentation Center (INPADOC) patent family

Look at all of the documents in the left toolbar.

Note: This example only shows one keyword search and one CPC search. You should plan to go through many iterations of keyword and classification searches.

For more assistance:

1. Visit our complete patent research guide:
   guides.lib.umich.edu/patents

2. Contact your patent librarians:
   Leena Lalwani
   734-936-2332  llalwani@umich.edu

   Paul Grochowski
   734-647-5738  grocho@umich.edu

Guides.lib.umich.edu/patents

Reference Desk: 734-647-5735
aael.ref@umich.edu

University of Michigan
North Campus ~ Duderstadt Center
2281 Bonisteel Boulevard
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48109-2094
1. Brainstorm keywords related to invention
   - Describe function and features of invention
   - Generate broad and narrow terms

   **Keywords for ‘Rotating cylinder rodent trap’**:
   - **Rodent**
     - mouse, mice, rodent, vermin, pest, mammal
   - **Trap**
     - trap, trapping, capturing
   - **Container**
     - bin, box, bucket, pail, receptacle
   - **Rotating cylinder**
     - axle, pipe, platform, rod, bobbin, spindle
   - **Ramp**
     - ladder, steps, inclined plane

2. Perform a keyword search in Espacenet (worldwide.espacenet.com)

3. In search results, look for patents and patent applications similar to your invention
   - Look at the cooperative patent classifications (CPC)
   - Record all relevant classification and sub-classification numbers

**Espacenet**: free online patent search service from the European Patent Office (EPO)
- worldwide.espacenet.com
  - Click ‘Advanced Search’
  - International coverage of over 80 million patents with complete cooperative patent classification (CPC)

**Disadvantages of other patent search services**:
- United States Patent & Trademark Office (USPTO)
  - Only covers US patents
- Google Patents
  - Patent coverage unknown
  - Refers CPC searches to Espacenet or USPTO

**Tools available at the Art, Architecture and Engineering Library (AAEL)**:
- PUBWest and PUBEast databases
- Patent related books

Starting a Patent Search
- Patent searching is complex and time consuming. Plan accordingly to spend several hours to learn the search process and evaluate results
- When searching for patents, keep a detailed record of:
  - Keywords, classifications and sub-classifications searched
  - Document numbers of patents and applications examined

**Icons**
- S subclassifications
- D definitions
- i notes
- ! warnings

Look for relevant results
Record all CPCs
Click on a CPC # to get more information