

# Patent timeline



You



Us

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## Before you apply

You should only apply if:

- You're confident your invention does not already exist and is inventive
- You have the time and money for the application process

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## Prepare your application

Your application must include:

- A description of your invention
- Technical features of your invention that are to be protected (known as 'claims')
- A summary of all the important technical aspects of your invention (known as the 'abstract')

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## File your initial application

You have to send at least your description and any drawings with your initial application. You can file your claims and abstract later, but sending everything together may avoid delays and mistakes.

As part of the process, you have to pay:

- £60 for filing an application (if you pay when you apply) or £75 if you pay later
- £150 (plus £20 for each claim over 25 claims) for the IPO to carry out a 'search' within 12 months of filing your initial application.
- £100 (plus £10 for each page of description over 35 pages) for the IPO to carry out a substantive examination.

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## After you apply

The IPO will:

- Send you a receipt with your application number and filing dates
- Conduct a basic check that your application is complete and your documents are in the right format

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## Search, publication and 'substantive examination'

Before your patent can be granted the Intellectual Property Office (IPO) must:

- Carry out a search to confirm your invention is new and inventive (within 6 months of you requesting it)
- Publish your application – (usually 18 months after your filing date). Publication does not mean your patent has been granted.
- Carry out a 'substantive examination' of your application (within 6 months of your application if you request it when you file your initial application). Otherwise, it could take place several years after you request it.

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## When a patent is granted

If your patent is granted:

- Your application will be published in its final form
- You'll be sent a certificate

You must renew your patent on the fourth anniversary of when you filed for it. You then need to renew it every year, up to 20 years.