



# Patents

## A Quick Guide

Patents are rights that protect a physical article or the way that article can be made. They protect your invention and enable you to take legal action against anyone who makes, uses, sells or imports your invention without your permission.

Some key issues to note are:

- Patents protect the way things work, what they do, how they do it, what they are made of or how they are made.
- Patent rights last for up to 20 years.
- In order to register a patent, you need to prove that it is new, involves an inventive step and is capable of industrial application.
- You need to be able to prove that it has not been disclosed to the public.
- Discoveries, scientific theories and mathematical methods, aesthetic creations, schemes, rules and methods for performing mental acts, playing games or doing business, computer programs and the presentation of information are specifically excluded from being registered as a patent.
- Some typical examples of registerable patents include:
  - mechanical devices, for example, a vacuum cleaner;
  - methods for doing things, such as dyeing or bleaching fabrics;
  - chemical compounds and mixtures of these, such as a new drug or a face cream.

## HOW WE CAN HELP

We can advise on all aspects of protection of your invention and advise whether patent protection is the right way to protect it or whether alternative intellectual property rights are more suitable. As the founding member of Mackrell International, an international network of independent law firms, we can offer intellectual property assistance worldwide.



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