

## Common Questions About Patents & Inventions

### Questions About Patents

#### How Long Does It Take To Get A Patent?

Anywhere from 18 to 30 months, typically.

The US Patent and Trademark office reports an average time of 22 months.

It takes time to document the invention properly then find and hire a good patent attorney or patent agent. Having done so, then comes the time necessary to properly explain and fully disclose the concept to the patent practitioner, which sounds more simple in theory than it often is in practice - every invention is different and presumably new!

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#### How Much Do Patents Cost?

Working with a quality patent attorney or professional patent practitioner will cost the typical independent inventor anywhere from \$2,500 to \$7,500, though some inventors file their own patent applications to save money while others pay upwards of \$10-15,000 for high priced marquee legal counsel in hopes of streamlining the process.

The costs are based upon two components: patent office costs (filing fees and maintenance costs associated with keeping a patent active for its full term) and fees paid to the patent professional for preparing, filing and prosecuting (following) the application with the PTO, representing your interests.

For a more detailed breakdown, see are [Articles](#) about the time and cost of filing a patent application.

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### Questions About Inventing

#### Can I Improve On An Existing Product?

Absolutely. Very few inventions are completely new and original.

That said, any patented product your invention relates to must be carefully researched and the patent legally reviewed to ensure that your invention does not infringe.

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### Questions About Copyrights

#### What Does A Copyright Protect?

A copyright protects *works of authorship, such as writings, music, and works of art* that have been tangibly expressed.

The **Library of Congress** registers copyrights which last for the **life of the author plus 70 years**.

[Star Wars](#) (the books and films), sound recordings like Mariah Carey albums and LiveAid

concerts, and video games like Madden 2007 are all works that are copyrighted.

\* source U.S. Patent and Trademark Office

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### How Do I Get A Copyright?

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### How Much Do Copyrights Cost?

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### Questions About Trademarks

#### What Does A Trademark Protect?

A trademark protects **words, names, symbols, sounds, or colors that distinguish goods and services.**

Trademarks, unlike patents, **can be renewed forever** as long as they are being used in business.

The roar of the *MGM* lion, the pink of the insulation made by *Owens-Corning* (who uses the Pink Panther in advertising by permission from its owner!), and the shape of a *Coca-Cola* bottle are familiar trademarks.

\* source U.S. Patent & Trademark Office

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#### How Do I Get A Trademark?

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#### How Much Do Trademarks Cost?

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### Questions About Product Licensing

#### What Does Product Licensing Mean?

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### Questions About The Media

#### How Do I Get Press Coverage For My Invention?

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### Questions About Marketing Inventions