



# PATENT SEARCHING TUTORIAL

Richard W. McKinney Engineering Library  
The General Libraries  
The University of Texas at Austin

## Introduction to Patent Searching

This Patent Searching Tutorial teaches the basics of patent searching. The specifics were written for patrons of the Patent and Trademark Depository at the Richard W. McKinney Engineering Library, the University of Texas at Austin.

Although some of the instructions given here may be unique to the McKinney Engineering Library and the focus of this tutorial is the Cassis system, the fundamentals of patent searching remain the same for any location.

By following this tutorial you will learn how to conduct an invention search, and by the time you are finished, you should be able to conduct a basic search to determine if your invention has already been granted a patent in the U.S.

This tutorial will take you step-by-step through a very simple invention search. You can expect your search to be more difficult and more time consuming than this search.



Links will be provided throughout this tutorial to sites on the World Wide Web with equivalent patent searching capabilities for anyone not using a Patent and Trademark Depository Library. We will include explanations of how these web-based tools might figure into a search strategy, and describe some of the benefits or pitfalls you might encounter while using them. Instructions on the use of these tools are found at the individual sites.

We will start with the premise that we have invented a bib for a hospital patient. In order to conduct a patent search we need to identify the classifications that your invention falls under. To do this, it's important that you learn about how the classification systems works. In order to familiarize yourself with the patent classification system, we suggest you read about "U.S. Subject of Invention Searching" from our Library handouts. For more information, you may also want to read the sections on Invention Searching in David Pressman's *Patent It Yourself*.



When searching the *Index to Patent Classifications*, remember that inventions are classified by how they work, not by *your* intended use.

## Index to Patent Classificaton

The first step will be to look at *The Index to U.S. Patent Classification*. This is the alphabetical subject index to the *Manual of Classification*. The *Index* is also available on the Assist Disc of the Cassis CD-ROMs, we find that using the *Index* in its paper format is easier.

We need to think of common terms describing our invention, its function, effect, end-product, structure, and use. We will look up the word "apron".

When we first think of the word "apron", most of us think of the garment protector, however we notice under the heading **Apron**, that there are many types of aprons listed. This is one of the reasons we do not search by key words, because while searching for the garment patents, we would have to weed through patents for the vending machine aprons, the dump car aprons, and the vehicle fender aprons.

Apparel		
	Class	Subclass
Apron (See Associated Machine)		
Apparel.....	2	48+
Design.....	D 2	861+
Design, combined with dress.....	D 2	775+
Cigar and cigarette machine.....	131	47+
Drawbridge.....	14	47
Dump car.....	105	279
Lathe.....	82	135+
Ship leak stopper.....	114	229
Vehicle fender.....	293	41
Vehicle storm protector.....	296	77.1+

There are three types of patents. The most common type of patent is a utility patent. This is one in which the invention works in a new way to perform a useful function. Patent searchers are frequently confused when they see Classifications or Patents that begin with “D”. These cover design patents. A design patent is one in which the invention is purely visual, it is based solely on the look of the item. The third type is for plant patents. These offer patent protection for plants that have been asexually reproduced.



Our apron would be a utility patent, because our idea has a utilitarian function, so we don’t look at the headings under “Apron” that say “design”.

We will need to conduct our search a little differently if we think our patent may be design patent. Read the section about Design patents starting on page 15 of this document.

We want to look at patents for an apron that is apparel, therefore we will be looking at Class 2 and Subclass 48. The plus sign (+) next to the 48 indicates that when we get to the next step, looking at the *Manual of Classification*, we will want to look around at the subclasses located near Subclass 48, in Class 2, for other, closely related, classifications.

We will note the class and subclass numbers, 2/48, before continuing to the next step, looking at the *Manual of Classification*

Index to U.S. Patent Classification is available online on the from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill at <http://sunsite.unc.edu/patents/index.html>.

Sometimes using the **Find** command, under the **Edit** pull down menu can be helpful in searching for one word in a large body of material.



If you don’t have access to Cassis, you might want to *Browse the U.S. Patent Classes* at <http://patents.uspto.gov/CLASSES/classes.html>. This list is in numerical order, not alphabetical. However, if you locate the class you are interested in you can click on it and you will be taken to a location with Class Definitions. Scroll down to find the Index and browse this list.

We find that most people prefer using the *Index* in paper form, if it is available to them, because it is easier to browse this way.

## Manual of Classification

Although the *Manual of Classification* is available through the CASSIS ASSIST disc and online from the United States Patent and Trademark Office at <http://www.uspto.gov>, we find it is most convenient to use it in its book form. The *Manual of Classification* comes in a multi-volume set. These books are not labeled with the Classification range, however, they continue as high as the 900s, so we can make an educated guess as to which book will contain a given Classification number.

We are looking for Class 2, so we can guess that we will find this in the first volume. After paging through some introductory material, we find Class 2, the class for Apparel.

Now we need to look for the Subclass. As we look down the listing of subclasses we notice that at first they appear to be in numerical order

CLASS 2 APPAREL	
1	MISCELLANEOUS
2	GUARDS AND PROTECTORS
2.11	.Astronaut's body cover
2.12	..Having relatively rotatable coaxial coupling component
2.13	..Having convoluted component
2.14	.Aviator's body cover
2.15	.Underwater diver's body cover
2.16	..Having an insulation layer
2.17	..Having a garment closure (e.g., zipper, Velcro ,etc.)
2.5	.Penetration resistant
▶410	.For wearer's head
4	..Insect repelling
5	..Firemen's helmets
6.1	..Aviator's helmets

but then they jump out of order, and then back in order again.

The reason for this is that over time the contents of a given subclass became too large to be easily manageable, as more inventions were patented, and the subclass was divided into two or more appropriate subclasses. It is the arrangement in which the subclass number is listed that is important, not the subclass number.

So we scan the list until we locate our subclass, Subclass 48.

Now we need to think about that plus sign (+) that we saw in the *Index of Classification*, the one that means we need to look around Subclass 48. Notice the system of dots that appear in front of the words with the Subclass number.

44	.Shoulder and back
45	.Shoulder
46	GARMENT PROTECTORS
47	.Skirts
48	.Aprons
49.1	..Infant's bib
49.2	...Having pocket for receiving debris or article
49.3	...Having fastener for attachment to tray or table
49.4	...Multilayer
49.5	....Removable layer
50	..Barbering

The heading, **GARMENT PROTECTORS** has no dots. It is a Main Line Class. **Apron** has one dot; that means it is a more specifically defined classification related to the classification before it with no dots. Therefore, **Apron**, in this section of the classification system, is a kind of garment protector. **Infant's bib** has two dots. It is a subset of the item before it with one

dot; an infant's bib is defined by the classification system as a kind of apron. Next we have three items with three dots; these are all kinds of **Infant's bibs**.



It is possible for an infant's bib to be classified under 2/48 if there are aspects of that classification in the invention.

We will want to consider the various aspects of our apron to decide if we want to investigate any of these other classifications and make a note of those which do interest us.



Keep in mind that if our invention is **not** an infant's bib, but, for instance, a bib for a hospital patient, we would also need to consider patents that are classified under the Class/Subclass group for "infant's bib", 2/49.1, because it works the same way as an infant's bib. It is not our intended use that matters, but how the invention functions.



There is an online version of the *Manual of Classification* available at <http://app1.uspto.gov/AIDS/access/search-class.html>. It is quite different from the version available at Patent and Trademark Depository Libraries. After entering your search terms, you will choose the appropriate Classification from a list. Be sure to use the Help on the Classification Search Page provided there.

Under some circumstances we might need to revise our search strategy at this point and go back to the beginning. If at this point, we can identify a classification which seems like a good match for our invention, we are ready to continue to search using the information provided through the CASSIS database from the United States Patent and Trademark Office.

### Using CASSIS

There are several Patent discs in the CASSIS database. You will be searching three of them for your invention search: Patents ASSIST, Patents Bibliographic Information, and Patents Classification information.

In order to use the information available on the CASSIS CD ROMs you will need to learn how to access it. At the McKinney Engineering Library, we have two computers on which you can perform your search. One computer has the discs already loaded onto it, the other computer you will need to load the discs yourself. This is very easy.

- If there is already a disc in the drive, you will need to remove it by pressing the **EJECT** button.
- **Do not** remove the disc from its case.
- Then with the arrow forward, push the disc you need to look at into the top drive.

From this point on, accessing the information is the same from both computers.

- With the mouse click on the name of the disc you need, such as "Patents ASSIST". This will open the information on the disc.
- You will see a screen with information such as the origins of the disc, dates of coverage, and a list of the items available on the disc.
- Use the arrow keys to move the highlighter bar to the item that interests you and press **Enter**.
- You may see a red box with the instruction:

Press Any Key to Continue

From here the screen accessed will vary depending on which disc you are using. For your invention search the first disc you will want to look at will be the *ASSIST* disc.

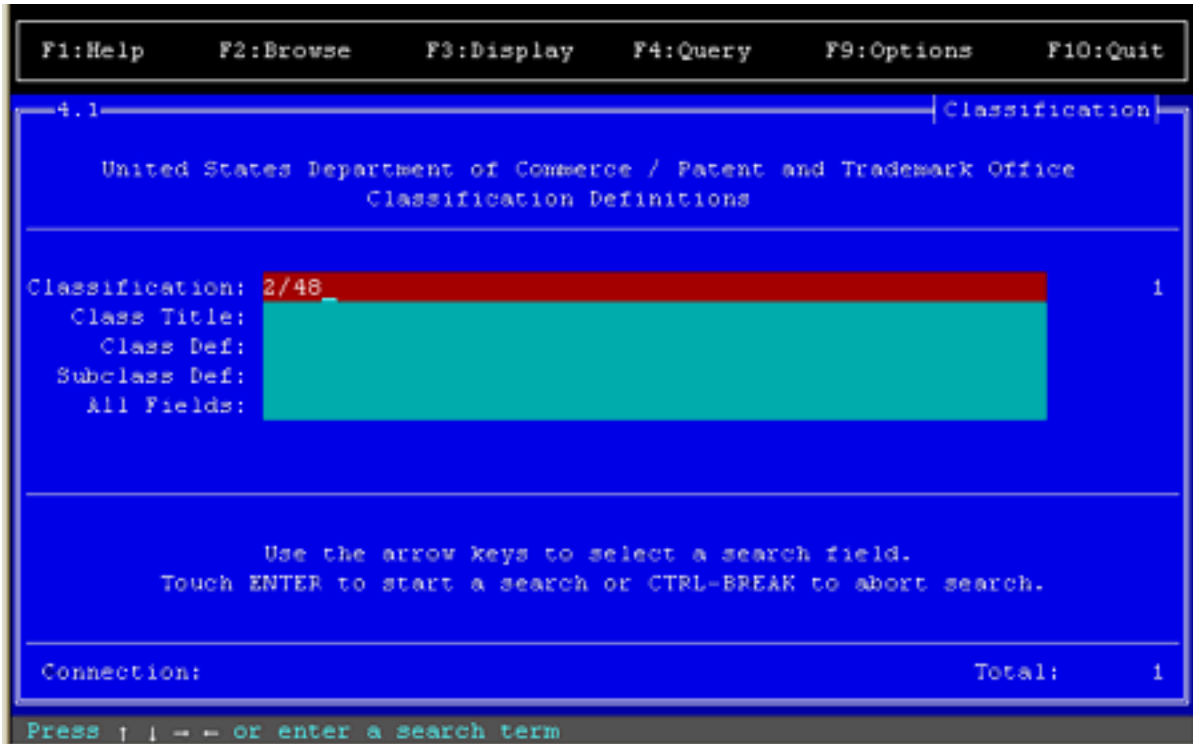
### ASSIST

The ASSIST disc contains information that will be helpful to your patenting process. For example, here you will find a Roster of Attorneys who are registered with the Patent and Trademark Office, but we will focus on the file of most interest to those conducting a patent search.

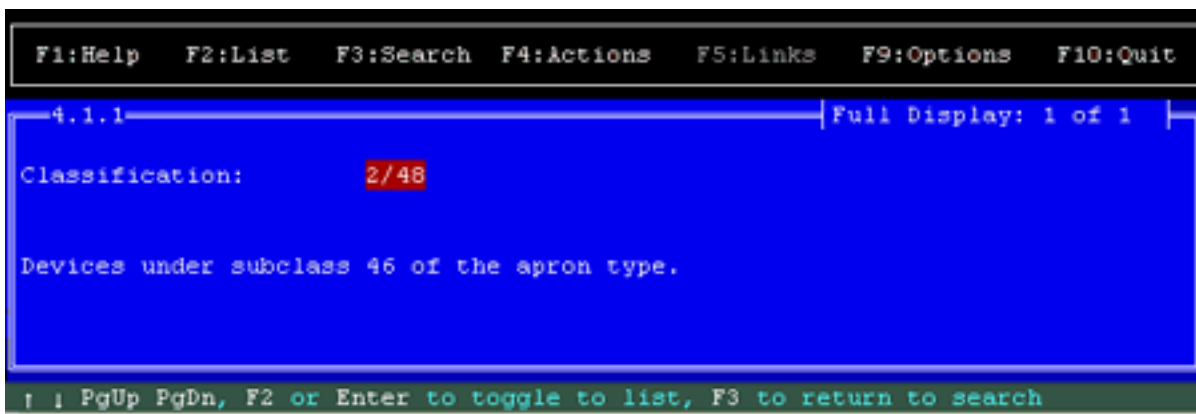
Access the menu of items available on ASSIST and select Classification Definitions by using the arrow key to move the highlighter bar. With Classification Definitions selected, press **Enter**.

We will be using the ASSIST disc to read the definitions of the relevant class(es) and subclass(es). We will also find important search notes and suggestions of other class/subclass combinations to search.

For our search for aprons we enter:



and press **F3** to display the results.



This gives us a very simple definition, but what might be the most important piece of information given here is the referral to 2/46, the class and subclass combination for Garment Protectors.

Press **F3** to return to the Search Screen. Then in place of subclass 48, put in 46, press **Enter** and then **F3** to **Display**.

```

F1:Help  F2:List  F3:Search  F4:Actions  F5:Links  F9:Options  F10:Quit
-----4.1.1-----|Full Display: 1 of 1|
Classification:      2/46

Devices under the class definition comprising garments worn primarily to
protect other garments from wear or injury.

SEARCH THIS CLASS, SUBCLASS:

175.6+, for a hat having a removable weather guard.

209.11, for a head covering having a convertible crown.

231+,   for trouser protectors.

↑ | PgUp PgDn, F2 or Enter to toggle to list, F3 to return to search

```

This screen is more informative. First we notice a definition for 2/46, explaining what is meant by garment protector.

However this screen has more to offer. Here we can take advantage of some of the expertise of the patent examiners.

We find suggestions for other subclasses to consider. So although we are not interested in any of the hat or head protectors while searching for patents on aprons, we may want to take a look at Trouser Protectors, class 2/subclass 231.

There are also some suggestions of other class/subclass combinations, in case we were looking in the wrong classification. It would be easy to think that a protective liner might be considered a garment protector, but this is actually located in Class 450, the classification for Foundation Garments.

```

F1:Help  F2:List  F3:Search  F4:Actions  F5:Links  F9:Options  F10:Quit
-----4.1.1-----|Full Display: 1 of 1|
SEARCH CLASS:

223,   Apparel Apparatus, subclass 54 for machines and machine methods for
making dress shields.

450,   Foundation Garments, subclass 153 for protective liners, covers or
shields for corsets.

↑ | PgUp PgDn, F2 or Enter to toggle to list, F3 to return to search

```



We may also want to look at a general statement of a class as a whole. For our Class 2 search we would enter our search data in the Classification field as 2/\*.



Patent definitions are available online at <http://app1.uspto.gov/AIDS/access/search-class.html> through the Manual of Classification Search option and at <http://patents.uspto.gov/CLASSES/classes.html> Browse U.S. Patents Classes. Sometimes using the **Find** command, under the **Edit** pull down menu can be helpful in searching for one word in a large body of material.

After looking over any relevant information and taking notes on points for later investigation, we will continue with our search for aprons in 2/48 looking at Bibliographic Information.

## Bibliographic Information

Here we will retrieve and browse through titles of patents issued in a given Class and Subclass, from 1969 to the present. We will be able to look at abstracts for 2 ½ years of patents. We will consider if we are searching in the correct classification.

Access the Search Screen using the method described previously in the section on Cassis.

Enter the class/subclass in the Classification field, using the format 2/48, and press **Enter**.



The Bibliographic Information Disc also contains information from 1975 to the present for design and plant patents.



We do not want to use the Title Field to search for the word **apron** because it would bring us all those aprons that we saw in the *Index* that are not Apparel. It takes over 3 screens of Patent Titles for Aprons, before you get to the first Patent for an apron that is a garment.

This will show a total of 116. This means that 116 patents have used the class/subclass combination 2/48 since 1969. To display this information, press **F3**.

This brings us to the Patent Title List.

```
F1:Help  F2:Full  F3:Search  F4:Actions  F5:Links  F9:Options  F10:Quit

1.1.1 | Patent Title List: 1 of 116
-----|-----
Patent | Patent Title
Number |
-----|-----
5544364 | Nursing apron
5530968 | Commuter's apron
5493734 | Neck shield attachment for helmet
5491843 | Exercise shroud
5479662 | Privacy covering for nursing mothers
5469582 | Breast feeding cover
5469580 | Shampoo cape
5454119 | Bed jacket
5444873 | Disposable protective gowns
5440762 | Nursing cover and method of making same
5377359 | Food spill catching device
5343565 | Clothing, in particular for cooks
5327586 | Dance skirt
5322918 | Disposable paper bath towel with integral apertures and tie
5318507 | Detachable back, belt, apron, method
5295267 | Protective loincloth garment for motorcycle riders

↑ | PgUp PgDn, F2 or Enter to toggle to full, F3 to return to search
```

We'll look at these records, to get a better idea of what kind of patent is assigned to 2/48. At this point we especially want to look at the most recent records so we can read Abstracts. A patent Abstract is a general description of the invention. It is **not** what is new and useful, or what is patentable. We want to read the Abstracts to see if we have selected an appropriate Classification to begin our search. We will not attempt to judge the contents of the patent by Abstract or Title.



We may find that we need to redirect the search and go back to the beginning.

To look at the record for “Shampoo cape”, use the arrow key to move the highlighter bar. With “Shampoo cape” highlighted, press **F2** or **Enter** to see the Full Record.

```
F1:Help  F2:List  F3:Search  F4:Actions  F5:Links  F9:Options  F10:Quit
-----1.1.1-----| Full Record: 7 of 116 |
Patent Number      5469580
Issue Date         1995-11-28
Assignee Name      ~Individually Owned Patent
Assignee Code      0
State / Country    IL
Classification     2/56 2/48 2/49.1 2/49.4 2/174
USAPat Volume ID  US_95_48A
Title              Shampoo cape
Abstract           A shampoo cape has a generally rectangularly shaped web
of pliable material and along the sides of the web are semi-rigid elongate
side members. The device is held in position against the neck of a person
whose hair is being shampooed by a detachable strap.
```

↑ | PgUp PgDn, F2 or Enter to toggle to list, F3 to return to search

We will read the Abstract and consider the Classifications. Notice that the Classification that we searched for, 2/48, is highlighted. However, 2/56 is the first Classification given. This is because 2/56 is the most significant Classification for this invention. If our invention was similar to this, we would want to make a note to also investigate 2/56.

Press **F2** to return to the Patent Title List. Next let’s look at the record for “Food spill catching device”. Use the arrow key to move the highlighter bar. With “Food spill catching device” highlighted, press **F2** or **Enter** to see the **Full Record**.

```
F1:Help  F2:List  F3:Search  F4:Actions  F5:Links  F9:Options  F10:Quit
-----1.1.1-----| Full Record: 11 of 116 |
Patent Number      5377359
Issue Date         1995-01-03
Assignee Name      QLH USA, INC.
Assignee Code      699060
State / Country    CA
Classification     2/48 2/46 2/51
USAPat Volume ID  US_95_01A
Title              Food spill catching device
Abstract           This invention pertains to a food spill catching device
comprising a first device body coupled to a second device body by pivotal
means. The two device bodies are frictionally movable relative to each other
into, and out of, closed position facing each other. The second device body
may be held on a table while the first device body is adapted to serve as a
shield for protecting a user's clothing from being soiled by food spills
while dining at a table.
```

↑ | PgUp PgDn, F2 or Enter to toggle to list, F3 to return to search

Here we notice that 2/48 is the first Classification given. The Classification for Apron is the most important one for this invention, however there is no mention of the word “apron” here.



If we had done a search using the word **apron** in the **Title or Abstract** field, we would have missed a patent that might be very important to our search.

The pieces of information that we will find useful for continuing our search are:

- Patent Number
- Issue Date
- Classifications
- Patent Title
- Abstract



*Bibliographic Information Searching by Class/Subclass* is available online from the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office at <http://patents.uspto.gov/index.html>. It covers patents issued from 1976 to the present. Be sure to read the Help Information provided.



Some searchers like to use the IBM Patent Server for patent searching. It is available at <http://patent.womplex.ibm.com/ibm.html>. This is a marvelous site, generously made available by IBM. They offer online Help for searching their patent server. Your primary search can be conducted by searching various fields, but the Classification field is *not* included. Once you have found a patent that interests you, you will notice that the Classifications are links. You can click on the Classifications and be taken to a list of all patents in that classification from 1971 to the present.



The U.S. Patent Citation Database is available at <http://cos.gdb.org> from the Community of Science. It provides extensive online search options for patents issued from 1971 to the present. You or your organization must be a subscriber to use this service. Records retrieved will have references to patents cited and all claims. The Community of Science provides online help for their search tools.

We will want to make a list of this information and proceed to search *The Official Gazette of the United States Patent and Trademark Office* for the complete list of these patents. Most patent searchers prefer to print this information. You can read information about printing options on page 14 .

### **Official Gazette-Patent Section**

*The Official Gazette of the United States Patent and Trademark Office* is published weekly in two parts by the USPTO. One for Trademarks and one for Patents. We will be using the Patent section.

At the McKinney Engineering Library, we have all the volumes of *The Official Gazette* that have been published. These are found in print form on the library book shelves at call number **T 223 A2** or on microfilm.

We will be using the Official Gazette to look up all the patents on the list which we have copied or printed from the Bibliographic Information to eliminate patents unrelated to the invention. Using the *Gazette* to look up the 116 patents found under class 2/48 is much faster than looking up the full patents on microfilm.



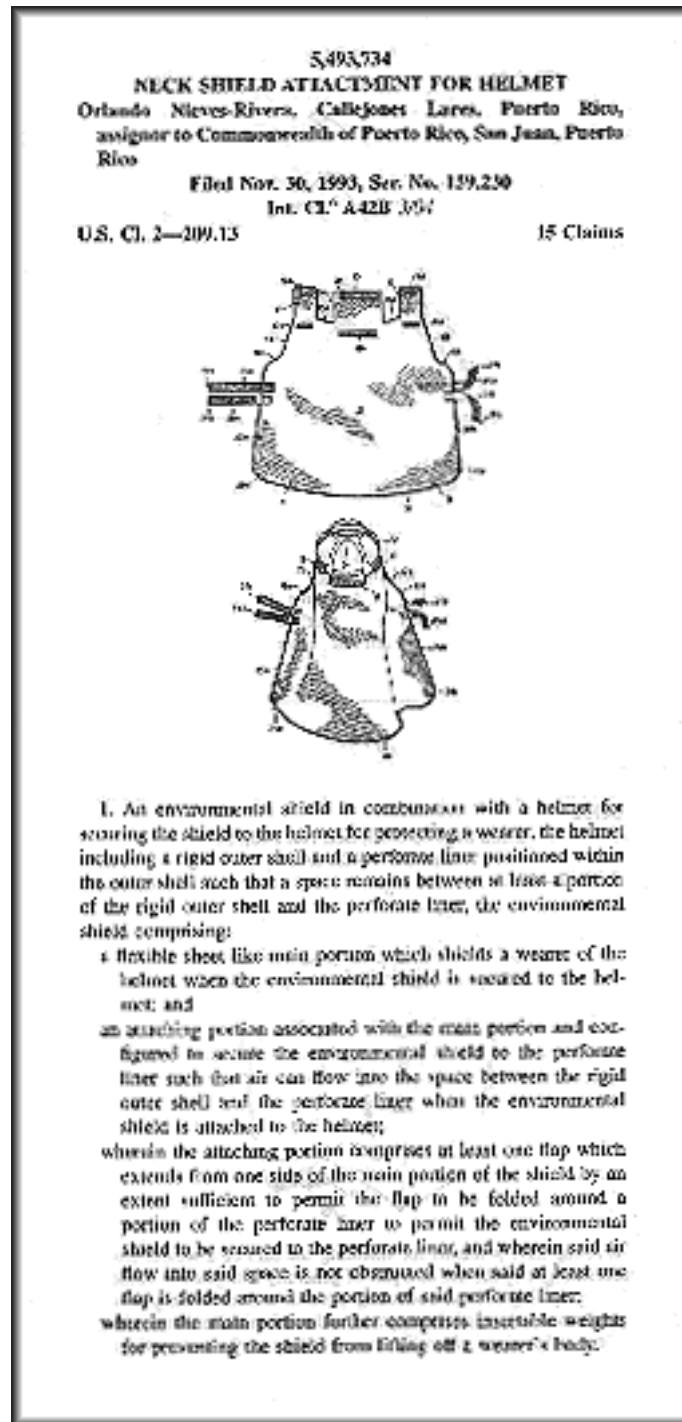
The claims are what the inventor is saying is new and different about a particular patent. The claims describe the Intellectual Property.



Once a claimed item has been patented, no other inventor may receive a patent for the same claim, however, a new invention can work as an addition to an earlier invention.

The first patent on that list is “Neck shield attachment for helmet”. The issue date for that patent is February 27, 1996. We will locate the *Official Gazette* that was published on that day. Then we will locate the patent in that edition of the *Gazette* by its number, in this case 5,493,734.

In the *Gazette* we will find one drawing and one claim for each patent. The claim, usually claim #1, will be the most important one for the particular patent. We will look at the information provided in the *Official Gazette* to determine if we need to look at the full patent.



After evaluating all 116 patents on this list, we decide which patents need our individual attention. We may have only 5 patents for which we will actually require the information provided in the complete patent



Remember to do this for each class/subclass combination that relates to the invention.

## Complete Patent Document

At the Richard W. McKinney Library we have complete utility patents on microfilm from 1950 to the present and all design patents. These are housed in racks and cabinets near the Patent Searching Computers in chronological order.

We have determined which patents from the list are closely related to our invention. We will proceed to search the complete text and drawings of these patents to find out how different they are from our invention. From our original list of 116 patents, we have selected 7 that seem relevant to our invention.



Remember this list only consists of patents from 1969 to the present. You will also need to search the Classification Information for information on patents issued before 1969.

5,530,968: Commuter's apron

5,343,565: Clothing, in particular for cooks

5,052,055: Apron

4,079,465: Kitchen apron with changeable front panel

4,037,272: Recipe apron

3,602,916: Adjustable apron

3,428,962: Combined barbecue apron and mittens

We locate the patent film in the cabinet by number. "Commuter's apron", patent number 5,530,968 is found on a reel with Patents 5,530,911 to 5,531,210. You will be able to view the patents on the Film Reader/Printers. You can also copy them if you like.



The IBM Patent Server at <http://patent.womplex.ibm.com/ibm.html> has full text and images of all patents from 1980 to the present. Online help is available.



Full text and images for AIDS related patents are available online from the U.S., Japanese, and European patent offices at <http://patents.uspto.gov/index.html>. Online help is provided.

When looking at the full Patent, we want to look at the drawings and read the claims. We will also make note of the "references cited", other patents that were thought to be significantly related to the patented item.



US005530968A

United States Patent [19]

[31] Patent Number: 5,530,968

Crockett

[45] Date of Patent: Jul. 2, 1996

[54] COMMUTER'S APRON

372624 6/1990 European Pat. Off. 206

[70] Inventor: Wendy P. Crockett, 20 Upper Cir.,  
Carmel Valley, Calif. 93924

189362 11/1989 France

33805 02/1985 Germany 248,46

118283 4/1984 Sweden

311329 6/1989 Sweden

253941 4/1948 Switzerland

[21] Appl. No.: 419,958

[22] Filed: Apr. 11, 1995

[51] Int. Cl.<sup>6</sup> A48B 3/10

[52] U.S. Cl. 246; 248; 249.1; 249.2;  
249.3; 49.3; 49.4; 49.5; 50; 51; 52; 174;  
104; 105; 106; 243.1

[58] Field of Search 246; 48; 49.1;  
249.2; 49.3; 49.4; 49.5; 50; 51; 52; 174;  
104; 105; 106; 243.1

[56] References Cited

U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS

D. 303,375	8/1989	Wilson et al.	D0027
1,424,215	8/1922	Ross	
2,263,538	10/1941	French	351
2,608,337	6/1952	Mason	2774
2,836,290	4/1958	Edson	3/59
3,414,337	12/1968	Masler et al.	2489
3,583,558	7/1969	Davis	2449
4,423,523	1/1984	Bolter et al.	246 R
4,646,364	3/1987	O'Leary	246 R
4,668,224	4/1987	Ashcraft	246
4,924,525	5/1990	Hinsinger	246 R
5,181,275	1/1993	Scaglia	
5,218,711	6/1993	Mathews et al.	
5,228,692	6/1993	Con	

FOREIGN PATENT DOCUMENTS

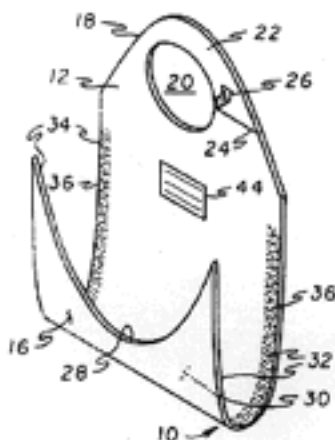
603105	6/1968	Canada	249.1
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Primary Examiner—Jeanette E. Chapman  
Attorney, Agent, or Firm—Richard C. Litman

[57] ABSTRACT

A commuter's apron provides for the containment of food and drink spillage for automobile and other vehicle drivers and passengers, while the vehicle is moving or stopped. The apron is preferably formed of a relatively thin sheet of polyethylene plastic or other material (e.g., coated paper or fabric), in order to be impervious to liquid and other spills. The upper and lower edges of each apron are congruent, thus enabling a plurality of the aprons to be die cut or otherwise formed continuously from a single elongate sheet or roll of sheet material with relatively little waste. All of the flat portions of the apron (i.e., the main body, pocket portion, and neck closure portion) are formed from a single, continuous sheet, with the only additional components required being tape or other means to close the neck closure portion and seal the sides of the pockets in the event heat sealing is not used. Thus, the present apron may be provided inexpensively with fast food meals, and/or dispensed from a container having a plurality of such aprons packaged separately therein. The apron may include an advertising or display message thereon, if desired.

7 Claims, 2 Drawing Sheets



If you find that the invention has already been patented, you may not file for a patent on it. If you do **not** find a patent that is the same as your invention, you can proceed to prepare a patent application.



Remember you will also need to search the Classification Information to look at patents issued before 1969.

Complete patents are also available on USAPat CD-ROM. Read about this on page 15.

**Classification Information**

Use the Classification Information to obtain a list of all patent numbers, from 1790 to the present, granted for every class and subclass to be searched. This provides indexing by class and subclass to patents older than those included in Bibliographic Information.

Access the Search Screen using the method described previously.

Enter the class/subclass in the Classification field, using the format 2/48, and press **Enter**.

```
F1:Help  F2:List  F3:Search  F4:Actions  F5:Links  F9:Options  F10:Quit

1.1.1 | Full Class Display : 1 of 1

Classification: 2/48      ORs: 201      XRs: 142      Total: 343

5544364 X 5530968 X 5493734 X 5491843 O 5479662 X 5469582 X 5469580 X
5454119 X 5444873 X 5440762 X 5377359 O 5343565 X 5327586 X 5322918 X
5318507 X 5295267 X 5291617 X 5268222 X 5233821 X 5220692 O 5218721 X
5209691 X 5208917 X 5181275 O 5181274 X 5150477 X 5148549 X 5123120 X
5113526 X 5107545 X 5070540 X 5062158 X 5052055 O 5036547 X 5033115 X
5031241 O 5028796 X 5018222 O 5014636 X 5005217 X 5003634 X 4963138 X
4951318 O 4946094 X 4924528 X 4891846 O 4873725 O 4850051 X 4843641 X
4837859 X 4833731 O 4766608 X 4754500 X 4753088 X 4723323 O 4712251 X
4710979 O 4698854 X 4697287 O 4685154 O 4660224 O 4649715 X 4622698 O
4602386 O 4545079 O 4543668 O 4527288 X 4526828 X 4475247 X 4473907 O
4459703 O 4423523 X 4412369 X 4359783 X 4330888 O 4306316 O 4288877 O
4255817 X 4231119 O 4225977 O 4215433 O 4215432 O 4174542 O 4172293 X
4106122 X 4079465 O 4055859 O 4038697 O 4037272 O 4009494 X 3996620 X
3984876 O 3952332 O 3945048 O 3914797 O 3879762 O 3863343 X 3818158 O
3801985 O 3793644 O 3778056 X 3777310 O 3747122 O 3693283 X 3629865 O
3625206 X 3624686 X 3619816 O 3616464 O 3602916 O 3601815 O 3557385 X

PgUp PgDn, F2 or Enter to toggle to list, F3 to return to search
```

These are all the items that have ever been patented using the Classification 2/48. They are listed in reverse chronological order, i.e. most recently issued patent first, from left to right.

The Os mean that the Classification we requested is an original reference for this patent, it is the first one in the class/subclass listing. The Xs mean that the Classification we requested is a cross reference for this patent, it is not the first one in the class/subclass listing.

Notice that patent number 5,469,580, the “Shampoo cape” has an X next to it. 2/56 is the first or original Classification for this patent, 2/48 is a cross reference. Patent number 5,377,359, the “Food spill catching device” has an O next to it, 2/48 is the first Classification for this patent.

The only information we have from this list to locate the patents in the *Gazette* and on film are the patent numbers. This is a little slower than locating them by date, however, we can eliminate a lot of the list. We have already looked at all the patents from 1969 to the present. Checking the list we compiled from the Bibliographic Information, we know that the first patent in this classification after the beginning of 1969 was 3,428,962, “Combined barbeque apron and mittens”. We will eliminate everything from this patent forward from the list.

To eliminate from the bottom end of the list, we can think in terms of technology, but we must be very careful not to overlook relevant patents.



Sometimes an invention could have been conceived of and patented, but not have been technologically possible or economically feasible.

We believe the technology for our idea existed before 1969, but could it have existed, for example, before 1945? Compare the patent numbers and the issue dates and eliminate the bottom end of the list. This leaves a more reasonable number of patents to search.



The only online equivalent we have found of the *Classification Information* is through Lexis/Nexis, a subscription database. If you or your organization has a subscription to Lexis/Nexis, you may have access to the Patent information available there. The LIBRARY you will search is PATENT and the FILE is CLASS. You format your search for an apron as follows: US-CL(2#48). If you want to learn more about Lexis/Nexis visit their home page at <http://www.lexis-nexis.com>.

Continue your search for these patents using the *Official Gazette* and then looking at the complete patents you have determined are significant to your search.

## Printing for Patent Searchers

### The Easy Way

In order to print you need to press **F4:Actions**. This will take you to a list of options, use the down-arrow key and select **Print** and press **Enter** to open a window with print selections. If you press **enter** again, the record will be printed, or you can select the specific information you want printed.

### Customizing the Print-Out for a Patent Search

As part of the Invention Search you will be investigating specific information from the Bibliographic Information disc.

1. Press **F4:Actions**.
2. Use the down arrow key and select **Print**.
3. Press **Enter** to open a window with print selections.
4. Highlight **Document Format**.
5. Press the space bar. This opens a window with format selections.
6. Use the arrow key to **Full Record**.
7. Move the highlighter bar to **Fields to Include**.
8. Press the space bar.



You will see a complete list of the fields in the Full Record. These will all have a check mark next to them.

9. Press the **delete** key to remove all the check marks.



For the invention search you will be selecting specific fields.

10. Select a field by moving the highlighter bar to the field of your choice, and press the space bar.
11. Move to the next field, and again press the space bar. Do this until you have selected all the fields you need to print. Then press **enter**.

For the purposes of an Invention Search, you will need:

- the Patent Number
- Issue Date
- Classifications
- Title
- Abstract

12. Move the highlighter to **What Range?**
13. Using the same method of highlighting and pressing the space bar, you will specify a list of **All Found Documents**.



If you wish to print only specific records you can do so in two ways. You can enter the **Document Range** or if you were on a specific record BEFORE selecting **F4:Actions**, you can choose to print the **Current Document**.

14. Press **enter** one more time and printing will begin.

### Design Patents

If you are conducting a patent search for a design patent, you will use the same basic method as searching for a utility patent. Here are a few important differences.

1. When looking in the *Index to the Patent Classification System*, you will want to look at the classifications that begin with D. For an apron design, we would look at Class D2 and Subclass 861.

Apparel		
	Class	Subclass
Apron (See Associated Machine)		
Apparel.....	2	48+
Design.....	D 2	861+
Design, combined with dress.....	D 2	775+
Cigar and cigarette machine.....	131	47+
Drawbridge.....	14	47

2. The Design Classifications are located in the **back** of the last volume of the *Manual of Classification*.
3. When you access a Design Class and Subclass on the Bibliographic Information Disc, you will notice that the Design Patents are the **last** in any Patent Title List.
4. All Design Patents begin with a **D**. "Protective garment for shoulders" is Patent Number D374,971.
5. The Bibliographic Information Disc covers design patents from 1975 to the present.
6. When you access the **full record** for a design patent on the Bibliographic Information Disc, you will notice that there is no abstract. Design patents are purely visual, so there is no written description.
7. When you are using the *Official Gazette* to look at Design Patents, you will find them at the **end** of the issue. The image found in the *Gazette* may be enough to indicate to you if your idea has been previously patented, without examining the full patent.
8. Complete design patents are found on film in the **last** patent cabinet, after the utility patents.
9. Complete design patents are also found on the USAPat CD-ROM.



When you are looking for information about design patents, they come **last**. They are at the **end** of the *Manual*, the **last** patents in any Patent Title list, at the **back** of the *Gazette* and, at the McKinney Engineering Library, at the **end** of the patent cabinets.

### Complete Patents on CD-ROM

Facsimile Images of United States Patents are now available on CD-ROM for patents from 1994 to the present. There usefulness is very limited due to technical problems that are being given attention at this time.



**Be certain** to remove the CD from its jewel case and place it in a CD Carrier **before** inserting it into the disc drive.

Each disc contains an index to the complete set up to its release date.

1. To locate the disc for the patent you want to access, place any recent patent disc in a CD-ROM carrier and load the disc into the disc drive. After pressing **Any Key**, an index screen will appear.
2. Type **S** to Search.
3. Enter the number of the patent that you are interested in locating at the **Enter Patent Number** prompt. Then press **Enter**.
4. The index will highlight the patent number *before* the number you are searching. For example, if we are searching Patent Number 5530968, Patent Number 5530967 will be highlighted.
5. To the right of the Patent Numbers you will find the USAPat Volume ID number. For Patent Number 5530968, this would be US\_96\_27A.
6. Locate Patent CD Volume 27A, and insert it into the disc drive **in a CD-ROM case**, repeating steps 2 through 4.
7. Press **Enter** or **V** to view the highlighted patent and **W** to download.
8. To exit press the **ESC** key and then press **Enter**.

The latest patent disc will have the most complete index.

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