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How to Search Patents
Efficiently in Japan

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with Free Vision

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Two important factors for prior art searches

Understand Claimed Inventions

Technological Knowledge

Assume Invalidation Logics

Tune Search Equations

Choose Relevant Publications

Draft Search Report

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Assume Invalidation Logics before conducting searches

"Understand claimed inventions"

Visualize various examples of the claimed invention

Visualize prior art that discloses the examples

Assume invalidation logics that is based on:
(1) a single prior art for non-novelty; and
(2) a combination of prior art for non-inventiveness

"Tune Search Equations"

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Search histories in the U.S. help us assume invalidation logics in Japan.

Search Histories (in the U.S.)

Search Equation

Claim Elements Being Disclosed

Close Prior Art

Claim Elements NOT Disclosed

Assuming invalidation logics

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When Tuning Search Equations, a preliminary search is indispensable

"Assume Invalidation Logics"

Preliminary Search

Noise small enough?   No

Yes

Understand the Noise Group

Tune Search Equation

"Choose Relevant Publications"

Ex.
Claimed Invention: Fuel cell for a car
Noise group: Fuel cell for a mobile phone

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Japanese patent search is recommended, if:

1. Japanese companies were active in a relevant patent field or strong in related product markets.

Example: memory, processor, optical device, disc controller, power controller, video codec, audio codec, steppers, and patterning masks

We are able to provide information on whether or not Japanese companies were active or strong upon receiving a patent number.

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Japanese patent search is recommended, if:

2. Prior art has not been found in English language patent publications

Searching Japanese patent publications may be more productive than searching English academic papers.

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Searching Japanese patent publications is NOT recommended where:

The claimed invention is directed to systems or regulations specific to countries other than Japan.

Example: Communication architecture for old US cellular systems,
Receivers for EP TV systems

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Classification of patent applications in Japan

1. IPC
   Basic classification in Japan.
   Most often used in prior art searches.

2. FI
   Subclass of IPC.
   Helpful when a claim corresponds well with any FI.

3. F-term
   Specifies technical features described in the spec.
   Helpful when FI does not yield relevant prior art.

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Search Report may additionally include:

1. Full or Partial Translation of the most relevant prior art, and

2. Comparison Table of each claimed element and prior art description.

Additional fees for the above are relatively inexpensive because claimed inventions are already considered in:
(1) Assuming invalidation logics,
(2) Tuning search equations, and
(3) Choosing relevant prior art.

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Translation of the publications should be provided, if:

1. A single publication discloses all claim elements,

2. The publication discloses claim elements not previously discovered, or

3. The publication is more relevant than those already found.

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What information helps when deciding what to translate?

1. The most relevant publications already found
   This can be included in our comparison table.

2. Comparison table (already made)
   Links the publications with the claim elements.
   Our comparison table should be an update of the received table.

3. Preferable maximum translation fee
   Typically $2,000 - $3,000.
   Exceed this only when the prior art is very strong.

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