

CPC Essentials I Part A

Introduction to CPC Essentials and Patent Classification Systems

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A Foreword

Cooperative Patent Classification, or CPC, is one of the most important tools for effective prior art searches. After CPC was implemented at USPTO, the Office has invested substantial efforts to improve our CPC classification practices. We have developed some new tools, including *CAT*, *Crosswalk*, and *CPC Navigators*, to facilitate CPC practice during examination.

Moreover, to assist our examiners in performing thorough CPC searches, new patent applications are given full classification based on their entire disclosures, not just on their claims. The inclusion of more classification symbols in patent applications enables examiners to carry out more thorough searches.

Now is a good time to provide you with a new series of CBT or computer based training modules called *CPC Essentials*, which contain comprehensive and updated information about the CPC scheme, classification practices and search strategies. In response to your feedback, *CPC Essentials* also include guidelines for classification and helpful tips for search strategies.

We hope that you will take advantage of all these new tools and developments, as well as *CPC Essentials*, so that you may optimize your CPC classification and search practices during examination.

USPTO CPC Joint Governance Board

Introduction to CPC Essentials

We heard you...

I have a hard time following the CPC scheme and finding out the appropriate symbols for my searches.

I normally only use text search for my art, I don't see how CPC would benefit me.

Should I modify and update the initial classifications of my case during examination or at allowance?

CPC works very well for me! Actually, using CPC, I was able to find some good prior art that I missed by using only a text search.

I get too many hits from my CPC search. Is there a good strategy available for sorting CPC search results?



About the CPC Essentials Series

CPC Essentials I: Patent Classification Systems and CPC Scheme

- Importance of the patent classification systems
- CPC scheme overview
 - Hierarchical structure and symbols
 - CPC scheme features and their functions
 - How to navigate CPC scheme to acquire useful information

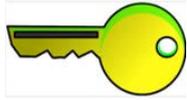
CPC Essentials II: CPC Classification

- Step-by-step classification procedure and CPC classification principles and rules
- What to classify: Identifying the subject matter to be classified
- Where to classify: Identifying the appropriate CPC symbols
- Good classification practice; tips, advice and Examiners' checklist

CPC Essentials III: CPC Search Strategies

- Approaches and tools for CPC searches
- Using CPC scheme as guidance for refining searches
- Examples in different technical fields

Slide Icons Designated for Future Reference



Slides that highlight **key concepts**.



Slides that contain **helpful tips**.



Slides that contain **important questions and answers**



Slides that contain **summaries**.



Slides that contain **knowledge check**.

Get The Most Out of *CPC Essentials*



- **Build a solid reference frame of the CPC scheme and classification**
 - CPC scheme, general classification principles and rules, and CPC search tools and strategies.
- **Actively adapt this general training to your technical field**
 - Open a CPC scheme in your technical field while following the *CPC Essentials*; notice similar topics in the scheme, e.g. field-specific classification and search information.
 - Adapt the general classification principles to your technical field, e.g. field specific rules, functional- and application-oriented places, etc.
 - Team up with other examiners to exchange knowledge, tips, and good practices.

Patent Classification Systems

Patent Classification Systems

- Systems for organizing patent documents, including patent applications and patents, into relatively small collections based on common technical subject matter
- Search tools for the retrieval of patent documents containing novel technical and legal information in an efficient manner.
- A means for determining the state of the art in any given technological field

Who Uses Patent Classification Systems?

- Patent offices
- Classifiers
- Examiners
- Attorneys and agents
- General public

International Patent Classification System (IPC)

- An internationally harmonized system for classification of patent documents of different countries
- Established under the Strasbourg Agreement in 1971 and entered into force on October 7, 1975 (Strasbourg Agreement is still in force today. Currently, more than 100 member states)
- An effective search tool for the retrieval of patent documents
- Used by most patent offices. IPC symbols are given to each Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT) publication
- World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) oversees IPC classification standards

Cooperative Patent Classification System (CPC)

- A classification system jointly developed between USPTO and EPO, launched at USPTO on January 1, 2013, to classify all USPTO and EPO patent documents in one common classification system
- Based on the International Patent Classification System (IPC), the CPC takes the patent world one step closer to global harmonization
- Allows efficient information retrieval in the digital age
 - More powerful than IPC by containing many more subgroups, or “breakdowns”, than IPC. Includes more than 250,000 symbols
 - CPC classifies all technical information in the entire patent application, not just published claims
 - A patent document is classified in all the relevant technical areas
- Actively maintained to provide a technologically up-to-date and dynamic classification system.

Summary

You should now understand:

- Importance of patent classification systems
- Relationship of IPC and CPC

Please proceed to Part B



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