

# Three Types of Patents

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Often, novice inventors are confused as to the various types of patents. This list is a good starting basis for understanding the various types of patents.

## (1) Utility Patent

This is what most people think of when hearing the word "patent." A utility patent involves something "useful" such as inventions in the electrical, chemical, mechanical, software, pharmaceutical, business method, and other fields. The term for a utility patent is 20 years after the patent's application date.

## (2) Design Patent

The design patent protects the ornamental aspects of an item. Essentially the design covers how the thing looks. The term for a design patent is 14 years after the issue date.

## (3) Plant Patent

As the term plainly states, a plant patent covers a plant. More specifically, a plant patent protects asexually reproduced new plant varieties. The term for a plant patent is 20 years from the application date.