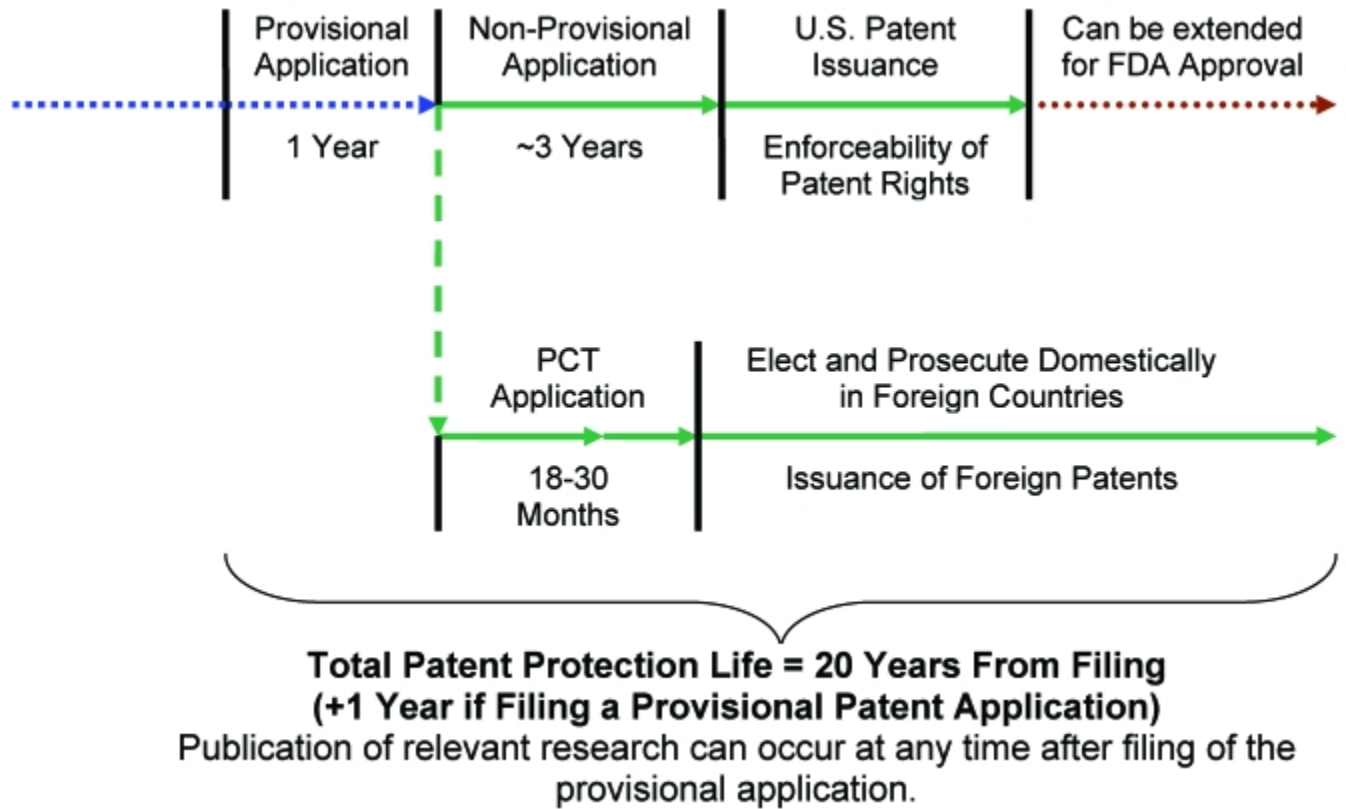


Term	Definition	Duration of protection
Patent	A property right granted by the US Government to an inventor “to exclude others from making, using, offering for sale, or selling the invention throughout the United States or importing the invention into the United States” for a limited time in exchange for public disclosure of the invention when the patent is granted.	Utility patents: 20 y from filing
Trademark	A property right used to protect words, names, symbols, sounds, or colors that distinguish goods and services from those manufactured or sold by others and to indicate the source of the goods. Trademarks, unlike patents, can be renewed forever as long as they are being used in commerce.	Continuous
Copyright	A property right used to protect works of authorship, such as writings, music, and works of art that have been tangibly expressed.	Life + 70 y
Creative Commons	A not-for-profit company based in Massachusetts that allows an author to reserve “some rights” through the use of 1 of its license agreements.	Life + 70 y
Trade Secret	A property right that consists of information that companies keep secret to give them an advantage over their competitors.	Continuous
Know-how	Similar to trade secrets but may also be defined as closely held knowledge in a given field created by skills or experience.	Continuous

Forms of intellectual property protection. The definitions of patent, trademark, copyright, and trade secret were obtained from the United States Patent and Trademark Office and are a copyright work of the US Government (17 U.S.C. § 403).

Term	Definition
Patent prosecution	A technical term for the patent requirement that a patent application be scrutinized by an examiner in the Patent Office. The examiner is charged with ensuring that the patent application meets all the patent requirements. This examination process is requirement for authorizing the application to become an issued patent.
Scope of patent protection	This term refers to the breadth of the various issued claims, combined with the various territories and foreign countries in which foreign patent protection is secured.
Best-mode requirement	This term refers to a codified rule that requires an applicant to include the best mode of the invention as it is conceived at the time of filing the patent application. Therefore, the specification in the application must show an enabled invention and also disclose the optimal embodiment of the invention. This US law differs from many foreign jurisdictions, which may not require disclosure of the best mode. If best mode disclosure is not required, the inventor can obtain a patent yet retain an optimized embodiment of the invention as a trade secret.
PCT patent application	PCT is an acronym for the Patent Cooperation Treaty. This treaty allows an applicant to use a single application to obtain international protection in selected member countries and to delay the foreign prosecutions in each selected country for as long as 30 mo.
Prior art	This term refers to any publication or publicly available information that may be used to argue against the allowability of a patent application.
Office Action	An Office Action is a report generated by the US Patent and Trademark Office that requests additional information, modifications, or arguments to overcome rejections or objections raised by the examiner that prevent approval of a patent application.
Priority date (or claiming priority)	A priority date is the date of the first filing of any given patent application. That date establishes a mark in time, such that an inventor can claim conception of the idea at least as early as that filing date. Continuation patent applications often reference back to the first priority date to avoid prior art objections or rejections.

The terminology of intellectual property.



Basic process of patent prosecution and issuance. This diagram summarizes the events that occur with regard to successful prosecution and issuance of a patent. An estimated or average time frame for completing each phase is provided.