



Utility Patents

“Utility” patents are what most people understand as a “patent.” They protect new and useful inventions that are products, processes or machines. The invention can be brand new or highly innovative. It can be a relatively modest improvement to an existing product or method. But it can’t be a merely “obvious” improvement over that which already exists.

Teasing out what’s new and what’s “non-obvious” is part art and part science.

We have decades of experience doing exactly that – and we draw on that experience every day to help our clients.

We serve a wide range of industries and technologies.

The patent attorneys at Olive & Olive work with many different industries and product sectors. Our clients include prestigious research institutions, individual inventors, privately financed start-ups, growth-stage companies, and large corporations.

Here are some of the many technology areas we serve, with examples of inventions that fall under each category:

- **Medical Device and Method Patents** – injection devices, inhalers, insulin delivery devices, surgical devices, diagnostic systems and reagents, hematology instruments, cardiovascular devices, peripheral vascular devices, endoscopic devices and implants, orthopedics, patient monitoring systems
- **Mechanical Patents** – consumer products, furniture, engines, boats, motors, micro-electromechanical systems (MEMS), robotics, industrial equipment and machinery, automotive components, carbon-fiber goods, packaging, construction equipment, sports equipment, toys, and games

- **Chemical and Biotech Patents** – new chemical entities, methods of chemical synthesis, drug design platforms, drug screening and assays, formulations, therapeutic methods, in vivo therapeutics, molecular and cellular biology, nanomedicine, agrochemicals, pharmacogenomics, vaccines, therapeutic antibodies, biologics, and biosimilars, gene therapy
- **Electrical and Software Patents** – software applications, business and financial transaction methods, e-commerce and internet applications, end-user application programs, database applications and structures, data storage and mining, network communication protocols, operating systems, security and encryption, web-based applications, analog and digital circuits, flexible electronics, integrated circuits, 3D printing, semiconductor processes and devices, and e-games

Want to know more about patents? Check out our IP Learning Center. There you'll find detailed information about how the patent application process works, how patents are obtained and enforced, how to avoid being scammed by invention assistance marketing groups, and how to determine whether an invention is new and non-obvious.

Olive & Olive is a specialized intellectual property firm with 60 years of experience in patent, trademark and copyright law.

We work with inventors at all levels of sophistication.

How you invent doesn't matter. We've seen it all—and we encourage innovation.

One successful inventor designed complex engines by drawing them in pencil on paper napkins. Others take advantage of computing power. Many research universities have facilities that individual entrepreneurs can only dream of, but significant inventions often spring from more modest settings.

Many highly successful inventions are triggered not so much by decades of research but by astute observation of a problem. Doctors and nurses, for example, often see inefficiencies as they make their rounds. Then they develop new products and methods of treatment to solve the problem, saving time and improving outcomes. The same goes for electricians and builders, whose inventions help construct homes and office buildings in ways that are faster, cheaper and safer.

The key to innovation is creating an atmosphere in which everyone is encouraged to brainstorm solutions. This can lead to significant - and commercially successful - breakthroughs, which might need a utility patent for protection.

Your idea could be a money-maker.

If your new concept saves time or money, improves outcomes, or solves a problem ... it may well be patentable. And that patent could turn your brainstorm into revenue, either through direct sale or licensing.

But don't wait until it's too late. Patent rights can be lost forever if protection isn't sought promptly. That's why it pays to have an initial conference with an experienced patent attorney fairly early in the inventive process - especially if the patenting process is new to you.

The attorneys at Olive & Olive will talk through your invention, compare it to what's already known in the field, and give you an unbiased opinion as to whether it's protectable. They'll also help you think through whether a utility patent is likely to make business sense for you. This is true whether you are a university, a business, or an individual inventor.

If your invention isn't yet fully-fledged, we'll let you know. But at least you'll get a good understanding of the risks, possibilities, and timeline for protecting your concept. And you'll learn how best to protect yourself going forward.

If patentability is doubtful - or if for some other reason patent protection isn't a good option for your invention, we'll help you figure out other ways to get the most out of your idea.

If a utility patent is a good solution for you, the patent attorneys at Olive & Olive will be with you every step of the way - from the initial search through the application process - working to make your dreams become a reality.
