

# Design Patent Examiners

## What is a design patent examiner?

A design patent examiner is a federal employee who examines applications to determine whether or not a design patent can be granted. Design patents protect the ornamental appearance of an article and are distinct from utility patents, which protect the way an article is used and functions.

As a design patent examiner, you will:

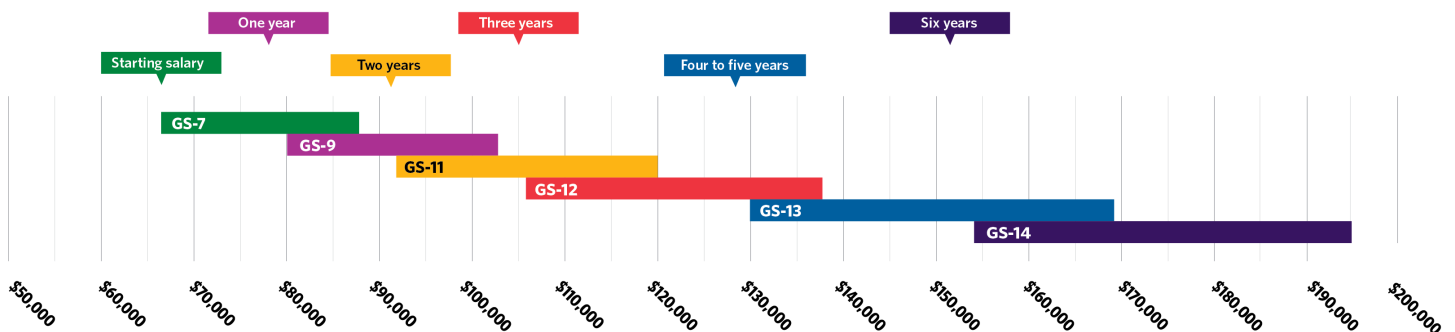
- Search prior art to ensure that a design is new and unique
- Review the application for conformity with formal requirements
- Write office actions communicating your findings on patentability to the applicants

## Basic qualifications

Degree (BA/BS) in industrial design, product design, architecture, applied arts, graphic design, fine/studio arts or art teacher education or equivalency as set forth in the most recent job announcement found at <https://uspto.usajobs.gov>.

## Compensation: Design examiner pay scale, fiscal year 2025

Potential promotions based on performance



“Being at the USPTO is a blessing and a dream career. After pursuing a B.S. in Fine Arts and an M.A. in Design Management, I was thrilled to learn that my arts education positioned me to become a patent examiner.”

**Cary R., Design Patent Examiner**



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