

# Patent Public Search - Setting up external searches

Quick Reference Guide 2025



For customers who run the same searches in Patent Public Search's Advanced Search interface on a periodic basis, there is a way to set up an external web link that will access Patent Public Search and conduct the search query without having to manually reenter the search each time. This is also useful for customers who want to set up links for document access to a U.S. patent on a web page or document. (Guidance on setting up direct links may be found in the "Setting up direct links" QRG.) Users may create their URLs on a separate sheet, then either copy/paste the URL to a Chrome® or Edge® browser, or click the URL from the sheet to open browser.

## Query format

1. The query will have the following format:

**`https://ppubs.uspto.gov/pubwebapp/external.html?q=xxxxxxx&db=xxx,xxx&type=xxx`**

Let's break down each part of the statement:

a. **`ppubs.uspto.gov/pubwebapp/external.html?`** (required)

This is the direct web link to the Patent Public Search search tool with a question mark added. This should be included in all queries. It must be followed by the actual query. This segment will not execute without adding a value for the query; see next step.

b. **`q=xxxxxxx`** (required)

This "x" segment is the same search query statement that would be used in Patent Public Search for searching a patent document number, e.g. **`q=(11235876)`**. It is optional to follow the patent number with the searchable index abbreviation, **`q=(11235876).pn`**. Other query examples will be addressed on page 3.

Example:

**`https://ppubs.uspto.gov/pubwebapp/external.html?q=(11235876).pn.`**

c. **`&db=xxx,xxx`** (optional)

This segment is optional wording that you can use to select the database(s) to search; as in **`&db=USPAT`**; since it is optional, if you don't include this language, it will default to search all three databases: USPAT, US-PGPUB, USOCR.

Example: **`https://ppubs.uspto.gov/pubwebapp/external.html?q=(11235876).pn.&db=USPAT`**

d. **&type=xxx** (optional)

This segment is for the type of search being conducted. It should be "ids" for patent publication number queries, as in **&type=ids**; also, the patent number should be group by parentheses when &type=ids is used. For searches that have text queries, it should be "queryString" as in **&type=queryString**. If "type" is not included in the statement, it will default to "queryString".

Example:

**https://ppubs.uspto.gov/pubwebapp/external.html?q=(11235876).pn.&db=USPAT&type=ids**

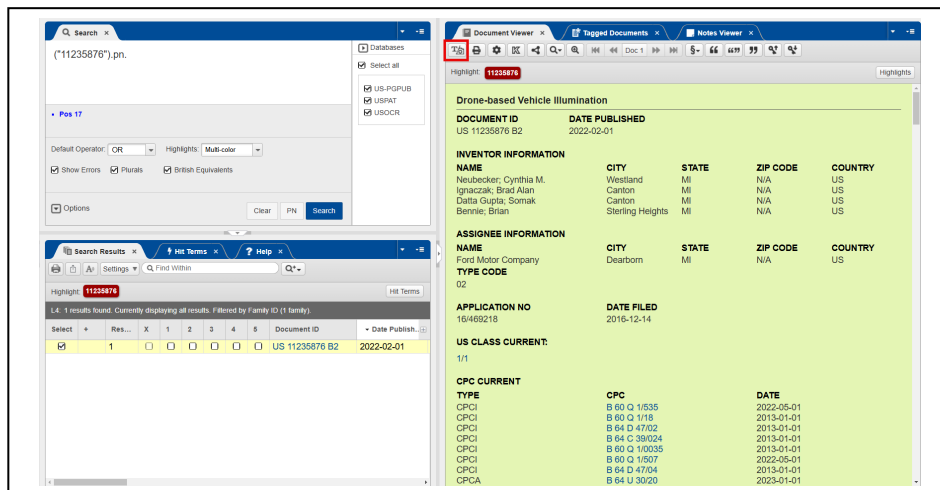


Figure 1. Search generated in the example for U.S. patent 11235876. Document Viewer display default is Full-Text view.

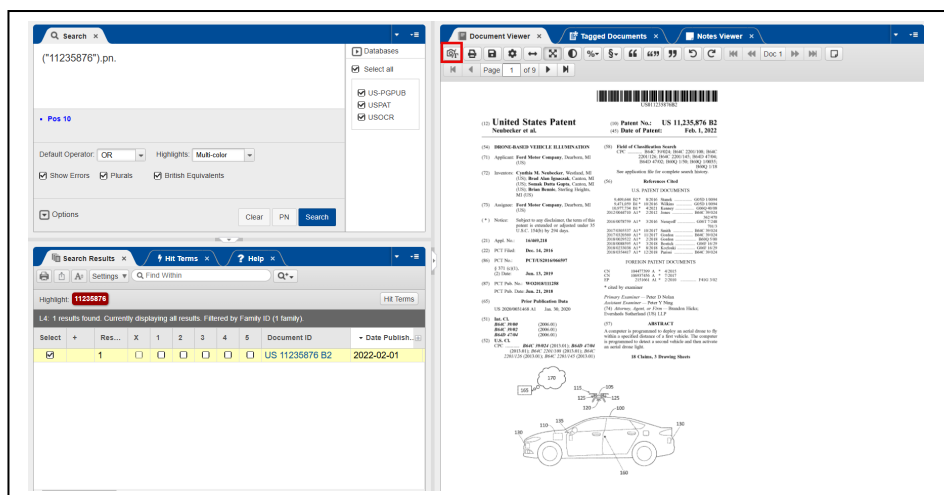


Figure 2. By selecting Full Text/Image toggle button (highlighted in red box) in Document Viewer toolbar, display toggles to pdf image display of U.S. patent 11235876.

## Search query examples

1. Searching for a patent or pre-grant publication:

**`https://ppubs.uspto.gov/pubwebapp/external.html?q=(0004321).pn.&db=USPAT&type=ids`**

Use leading zeros to fill a 7-digit entry if the patent number is 6 or less digits (e.g. "0004321"). If the patent number is 8 digits, enter all 8 digits (e.g. "10294671"). For patent number formats of different types of patents, please refer to the "Patent number searching" in [Advanced Search overview QRG](#). If the search does not include a database in the search query, the default is to search all three databases. Since there are overlap for entries in the USPAT and USOCR databases, one may have results with two entries for the same patent, one with the OCR text and the other without, if you do not select only the USPAT database in the search query.

2. Searching for a string of patent publications (patents and/or pre-grant publications):

**`https://ppubs.uspto.gov/pubwebapp/external.html?q=(20200039559|20200039558|20190351873|11225156|D926083).pn.&db=USPAT,US-PGPUB&type=ids`**

In this example, the search is for Published Applications 20200039559, 20200039558, 20190351873, Utility Patent 11225156, and Design Patent D926083. The sequence of patent numbers is delimited by the "|" symbol.

3. Searching for patents assigned a Cooperative Patent Classification:

**`https://ppubs.uspto.gov/pubwebapp/external.html?q=B62D1/16.cpc.&db=USPAT&type=queryString`**

In this example, the search is for CPC "B62D 1/16". Always leave out the space in a CPC classification when searching Patent Public Search. Multiple CPC classifications may be included in a query as well: `https://ppubs.uspto.gov/pubwebapp?q=(G06T7/15 OR H04L63/1408 OR H04N5/21).cpc.&db=USPAT&type=queryString`

4. Searching for patents assigned a U.S. Patent Classification:

**`https://ppubs.uspto.gov/pubwebapp/external.html?q=D12/175.ccls.&db=USPAT&type=queryString`**

In this example, the search is for USPC design class/subclass D12/175.

5. Searching for patents assigned to an assignee:

**`https://ppubs.uspto.gov/pubwebapp/external.html?q=(tesla%20ADJ%20inc).as.&db=USPAT&type=queryString`**

In this example, the search is for all patents assigned to "Tesla Inc". Use "%20" to insert a space(s) in the search query rather than use " " for a blank space.

6. Searching for keywords:

**[https://ppubs.uspto.gov/pubwebapp/external.html?q=heated%20NEAR%20\(steering%20ADJ%20wheel\)&db=USPAT&type=queryString](https://ppubs.uspto.gov/pubwebapp/external.html?q=heated%20NEAR%20(steering%20ADJ%20wheel)&db=USPAT&type=queryString)**

In this example, the search is for keywords heated NEAR (steering ADJ wheel). Use "%20" to insert a space(s) in the search query rather than use " " for a blank space. A searcher can use searchable index abbreviations in the query portion if needed.

7. Searching for multiple categories:

**[https://ppubs.uspto.gov/pubwebapp/external.html?q=\(steering%20ADJ%20wheel\)%20AND%20\(tesla%20ADJ%20inc\).as.&db=US-PGPUB,USPAT&type=queryString](https://ppubs.uspto.gov/pubwebapp/external.html?q=(steering%20ADJ%20wheel)%20AND%20(tesla%20ADJ%20inc).as.&db=US-PGPUB,USPAT&type=queryString)**

In this example, the search was for keywords adjacent to each other (steering ADJ wheel) AND an assignee (Tesla ADJ inc).

Searchers can combine any of the above categories in creating a query. There is, however, a limitation as to how many characters can be in a query which varies based on the browser used. If a searcher finds that a query statement will not execute due to too many characters, the remedy is to break up the query statement into separate individual queries.

In addition to using %20 instead of a space in a search query, there are other ASCII encoding alternatives that may be for other characters. For a list, see [https://www.w3schools.com/tags/ref\\_urlencode.asp](https://www.w3schools.com/tags/ref_urlencode.asp).