European Patent Register – pocket guide

Smart search field identifiers and operators

Field identifier	Description	Examples
in	inventor	in=siemens
pa	EP applicant, EP/UP proprietor	pa=smith
re	EP/UP representative	re=Vossius
op	opponent	op=basf
ti	title	ti="mouse trap"
ap	EP/WO application number	ap=ep99203729
pn	EP/WO publication number	pn=ep1000000
pr	priority number	pr=ep20050104792
fd	filing date	fd=20010526
pd	publication date	pd=20021016
prd	priority date	prd=19780707
ic	international classification	ic=a63b49/08
ia	inventor and applicant	ia="ries klaus" ia=apple

nm	inventor, EP applicant, opponent, EP/UP representative, EP/UP proprietor	nm=sony
txt	title, inventor, opponent, EP applicant, EP/UP representative, EP/UP proprietor	txt=microscope
num	EP/WO application number, EP/WO publication number and priority number	num=ep1000000 or num=wo2007117737
apl	appeal case number	apl="T0500 14"
grd	date of grant	grd=2010
ufd	unitary effect request date	ufd=2023
urd	unitary effect registration date	urd=2023

Operator		**Example**
Logical operators	and	pa=bosch and pa=siemens will retrieve documents where both Bosch and Siemens are applicants. The default operator in **Smart search** is “and”. Left has precedence over right. No operator has precedence by default.
	or	in=smith or in=huber will retrieve documents where the inventor's name is Smith or Huber.
	not	txt=laser not semiconductor will retrieve documents containing the word **laser**, while excluding documents containing the word **semiconductor**.
	all	ti all "paint brush head" will find all terms entered within quotes within the field identifier, although not necessarily in the order in which they appear. This corresponds to ti=(paint and

		brush and head).
	any	ti any "motor engine" will retrieve any of the terms entered within quotes within the field identifier. This corresponds to ti=(motor or engine).
Proximity	prox/distance<nr	mouse prox/distance<3 trap will retrieve documents where the words **mouse** and **trap** are less than three words apart in the TXT identifier and in the order shown.
	prox/unit=sentence	mouse prox/unit=sentence trap will retrieve documents where the words **mouse** and **trap** happen to be in the same sentence in the TXT identifier.
Comparison	=	pa=siemens will retrieve documents where the applicant's name is Siemens.
	>=	Greater than or equal to (only valid for the field identifier pd) pd >=1994 will retrieve documents having a publication date higher than or equal to 1994.
	<=	Less than or equal to (only valid for the field identifier pd) pd <=2014 will retrieve documents having a publication date less than or equal to 2014.
	within	Retrieve documents published within a date range pd within "1994 2014" pd within "1994, 2014" will retrieve documents published between 1994 and 2014.

Note that the query **pd >=1994 and pd <=2014** will also retrieve documents published between 1994 and 2014.

Truncations

Truncation symbols (wildcards) available in **Smart search** and **Advanced search**:

Wildcard	Description	Examples
*	stands for a string of characters of any length	car* will retrieve car, cars, card, cart, care, carbon, etc.
?	stands for zero or one character	car? will retrieve car, card, cart, care, etc. but **not** cards, carbon
#	stands for exactly one character	car# will retrieve card, cart, care, cars, etc. but **not** car, cards

Restrictions

Left truncation (?car) or truncation within a word (ca?t) is **not** supported.
If two alphanumeric characters precede ? or # (co? or pa#), then a maximum of three truncation symbols is allowed (ca??? will retrieve call, cart, card, care, cable, etc.).
If three or more alphanumeric characters precede a ? or # symbol, then a maximum of seven truncation symbols is allowed.
There must be at least three alphanumeric characters preceding a * symbol.
Truncation is not allowed in application numbers.
Wildcards should not be used in the **IPC** field as the data is auto-posted, meaning that each symbol is indexed at different levels. Example: B (section level), B65 (class level), B65D (subclass level), B65D81 (group level).

Searching with dates

Date formats

You can search for a specific **date** in both the **Advanced search** mask and the **Smart search** mask using any of the following formats:

Format	Examples
yyyy	2014
yyyymm yyyy-mm mm/yyyy mm.yyyy	201403 2014-03 03/2014 03.2014
yyyymmdd yyyy-mm-dd dd/mm/yyyy dd.mm.yyyy	20140305 2014-03-05 05/03/2014 05.03.2014

Date ranges

The following formats are admissible for publication date range searches in the **Advanced search** mask.

Format	Examples
<Date1>:<Date2> <Date1>,<Date2> "<Date1> <Date2>"	1994:2014 199401,201412 "19940101 20141231"

The following formats are admissible for publication date range searches in the **Smart search** mask.

Format	Examples
<Date1>:<Date2> pd="<Date1>:<Date2>" pd=<Date1>,<Date2> pd="<Date1> <Date2>"	1994:2014 pd="199401:201412" pd=199401,201412 pd="19940101 20141231"

Nested queries

Parentheses can be used to specify the order in which the search terms and operators should be interpreted.

Information within parentheses is read first, and then information outside parentheses is read next.

If there are nested parentheses, the search engine processes the innermost parenthetical expression first, then the next, and so on, until the entire query has been interpreted.

Examples:

(mouse or rat) and trap
((mouse or rat) and trap) or mousetrap

Search limitations

Maximum of 10 search terms per field.
Maximum of 20 terms in total and 19 operators per mask.
When combining search fields in the **Advanced search mask**, the default operator is “and”. It cannot be changed.
Default operators within a search field in the **Advanced search** mask are the following:

Search field	**Searched items**	**Default operator**
Publication number Application number Priority number	Document numbers	or
Filing date Publication date Priority date Date of grant	Dates	or
Applicant Inventor Representative Opponent	Names	and
IPC	Classification codes	and
Title	Keywords	and

If other operators are required these should be entered manually.

Truncation: see above
Apostrophes, hyphens and diacritical characters are not recognised.
Names are not searchable for documents published in other alphabets (Cyrillic, Greek, Japanese, etc.).

Last updated, May 2023