

1	Subject of protection	Computer programs	Computer programs are subject to protection.
		Business method	Business method itself is not subject to protection.
		Method of medical treatment	Methods of surgery, treatment and diagnosis on humans are not subject to protection. (Those on animals other than humans are subject to protection.)
2	Grace period		The grace period is 6 months from the date of disclosure (regardless of the priority period). A person seeking the application of the grace period must submit a document stating thereof at the time of filing of the patent application and a certificate within 30 days from the date of filing of the patent application.
3	Claiming priority		A priority claim may be declared in a patent application through the PCT route.
		Priority certificate	An applicant who filed the application to any of the Patent Offices with which electronic exchange of priority documents is available may be relieved from submitting priority documents (USPTO, EPO, KIPO, etc.).
4	Japanese translation		An applicant of an international patent application in foreign language must submit Japanese translations of the application documents. The translations must be submitted within 30 months from the priority date. Or, an applicant who has submitted National Documents may submit the translations within two months after the submission of the National Documents. In this case, translations submitted after 30 months from the priority date are acceptable. In the event that the translations of the scope of claim(s) and description have not been submitted within the time limit, the international patent application is deemed to have been withdrawn.
5	Filing documents	Claims	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple claims dependent on multiple claims are acceptable. (The fee is calculated based simply on the number of claims.) • There is no limit on the number of independent claims. (However, the unity requirements of the inventions must be fulfilled.) • A USE claim, which is acceptable in a European Patent application, is not acceptable in Japan, but the invention of a use-limited substance is patentable.
		Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no best mode requirement. • The applicant is obliged to disclose any publicly known literature. (There is no IDS submission obligation.) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Where the patent application does not comply with the above disclosure requirement, the application is rejected. → An amendment may be created to add the literature numbers.
		Drawings	There is no need to contain all compositions of claims in drawings. (The submission of drawings is optional.)
6	Extended prior effect		Where an applicant or inventor of a patent application is identical with that of a prior patent application that has been filed earlier, the application filed before the publication of the prior application is not to be rejected on the grounds of any invention disclosed in the description of the prior application. However, where an invention of an application is identical to the invention of a prior application that has been filed earlier, the application is rejected even if the applicant(s) and inventor(s) of both applications are identical.
7	National publication of translated version		Besides international publication, translations are published in the patent gazette. In the case of an international patent application in a foreign language, the applicant may claim compensation on the proviso that the national publication has been effected.

8	Substantive examination	Request for substantive examination	A request for examination must be made for a substantive examination. (Different from an application filed under EP or PCT, no search report is prepared. Different from an application filed under US, an examination is not automatically started.)
		Examination term	The average examination term is about 29 month from the filing date of the request for examination (2009). PPH is available between JPO and some Patent Offices such as EPO, USPTO, and KIPO
9	Office action	Argument/ amendment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In principle, an argument or amendment may be submitted within three months from the issuance of the notice of reasons for rejection. An extension of time up to three months is available. (An additional fee must be paid.) • With the final notice of reasons for rejection, the allowable scope of amendment becomes narrow.
10	Decision of rejection		<p>Without making a request for an appeal against decision of rejection, an applicant may divide the application within three months from the date of the decision of final rejection.</p> <p>It should be noted that the applicable scope of divisional application is different according to procedure.</p>
11	Appeal against decision of rejection		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where a substantive amendment has been made in the case of a request for an appeal against a decision of rejection, the patent application is transferred to a reexamination by an examiner before the trial. • As is the case with the final notice of reasons for rejection, the allowable scope of substantive amendment is limited.
12	Decision of allowance		An applicant may divide the patent application into two or more applications within 30 days from the date of the decision of allowance.
13	Patent right	Duration	<p>Patent rights shall expire 20 years from the filing date.</p> <p>The patent term may be extended by up to 5 years for pharmaceutical patents, etc. if given conditions are satisfied</p>
13	Invalidation of a patent		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no opposition filing system. However, information concerning the pending application may be provided to the Patent Office. • There is an invalidation trial system. (Any person may request an invalidation trial.)