

Conducting an FTO search

Search Management record



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FTO Search management record

FTO searches must be methodical and extremely well structured. If you are conducting your own preliminary FTO analyses – for example before seeking legal advice - use this framework to help structure and document your search and findings for your project.

Section A: Project

e.g. Our new Artificial Intelligence solution

Section B: Research question

Provide a description of the invention

What are the novel steps?

Section C: FTO Step 1: Identify key words and terms

Using your invention descriptions above, what key terms will be required to formulate a search query

Keywords – Primary term(s)

Synonyms for keywords

Abbreviations

Relevant IPCs, CPCs

If relevant: Sequence or chemical structure

Narrow the search (if necessary)

Running a quick test search using the above will reveal if there are too many irrelevant results being returned. Use the results to determine any terms that can be excluded.

EXCLUDE: Keywords:

Section C: FTO Step 2: Inventors and key players

Using your invention descriptions above, what key terms will be required to formulate a search query

Inventors	Companies	Other, e.g. Universities

FTO Step 3: Database audit – make a note of the databases used for the search for future reference and to provide an indication of the scope of resources used

Section C: FTO Step 4: Market / Scope

What are the planned geographies for your product?

Countries / Geographies

FTO Step 5: Selection of precise queries

Using the keywords, IPCs, exclusions, etc. note down the query or queries used.

Query / Queries

Section D: Relevant documents record

Record relevant documents and read carefully to identify the level of risk paying particular attention to the claims.

Reference		Risk identified			Level of risk
e.g. Patent Number	Document Link	Title / Abstract	Claims	Desc	e.g. High, meidum, low

This should be used preliminary framework. After following this framework you will now be in a better position to discuss the findings with your legal advisor(s) or IP team.