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Publication Numbers: Formats and Searching

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Number fields:

The **Publication Number** field encompasses both patent applications and granted patents because it references the number used when a document is published - without regard to the type of publication.

The **Application Number** field references the unique number assigned when an application is filed (as opposed to published). A published application will likely have an Application Number that differs from the Publication Number.

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Differences in number formats:

Each patent-issuing authority defines number formats that it considers appropriate for tracking its own filings and publications. While all patent application and publication numbers are based on a consecutive series of numbers, sometimes the numeric series is restarted each year (annual series) or periodically (repeating series). A patent-issuing authority can also maintain parallel numeric series for different types of publications, such as one for published applications, and another for granted patents.

Different authorities may use different numbers of characters in their publication numbers. And authorities can change (normally increase) the number of characters used at any time.

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Number of characters used/required for search and display:

Delphion does some publication number normalization (manipulation) internally but some number manipulation must also be done by users in order to achieve optimum results from your research.

The Delphion minimum is 12-characters and publications under 12 characters in length need to be zero filled/padded to bring them up to the 12-character minimum. This rule applies to all records, regardless of the date of publication.

For publication numbers issued before 2010, there is a 12-character maximum and numbers exceeding 12 characters in length need to be compressed to bring them down to 12 characters.

For publication numbers issued beginning January 1, 2010, there is no 12-character maximum and no requirement to compress publication numbers. There is, however, still a 12-character minimum imposed.

The following table details the options and requirements for the number of characters to be used:

Number type	Accepted search format (s)	Display format (result set, integrated view, etc.)	Manual input format (for work file creation, order form, etc.)	Data Export output format
Publication numbers with fewer than 12 characters (all years)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Native format (which has fewer than 12 characters) • 12-character format (using leading zero-fill rules) 	12-character format (using leading zero-fill rules)	12-character format (using leading zero fill rules)	Native format (which has fewer than 12 characters)
Publication numbers with 12 characters (all years)	Native 12-character format (no manipulation required)	Native 12-character format (no manipulation performed)	Native 12-character format (no manipulation performed)	Native 12-character format
Publication numbers with more than 12 characters (pre 2010)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Native format (which has more than 12 characters) • 12-character format (using compression rules) 	12-character format (using compression rules)	12-character format (using compression rules)	Native format (which has more than 12 characters)
Publication numbers with more than 12 characters (2010 and beyond)	Native format (which has more than 12 characters)	Native format (which has more than 12 characters)	Native format (which has more than 12 characters)	Native format (which has more than 12 characters)

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Best way to search:

The *best* way to search for a publication number is to use one of the search fields designed specifically for publication number searching. There are publication number-specific search fields on the Quick/Number form, the Advanced form, and the Boolean form. These publication number search fields are tolerant of the differences in patent number formats and so manipulation of the number (by the user) is generally not required (with the exception of removing spaces, commas, etc.).

You can also search for publication numbers (as number strings) in text search boxes (e.g., on the Quick/Number form, on the Advanced form) but, when searching for publication numbers as text strings, the system is unable to "help" with patent number format differences.

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Publication number formats:

The full publication number always starts with the 2-character country code and always ends with the 2-character kind code (or one or two underscores as placeholders for the kind code). See the Delphion Help Center list of [kind codes](#).

The characters in the center can be thought of as the "core" of the publication number — they could include a year, a prefix, or a place of filing or city code. If the characters in hand plus the country and kind codes do not equal the 12-character minimum, then "leading zeroes" are added (to the numeric part) so that the full publication number is 12 characters.

- One or more of the first numerals used may be zeroes based on the collection (the EPA and EPB use this convention).
- In certain collections, initial numerals indicate the year the patent (or application) was granted (US Applications and PCT publications follow this convention).
- For US Granted patents, there may be a two-character prefix. See the Delphion Help Center explanation of [US Granted prefixes](#).
- Some patenting authorities, IT (Italy) and Mexico (MX) for example, use a 1-2 character place of filing or city code.
- German Granted patents have a 2-character IP type indicator following the country code and prior to the year: DE202005010225U1 ("20" is the IP type).
- Leading zeroes may be added during processing when required to "normalize" the publication number to the 12-digit Delphion minimum. If leading zeroes are required and a prefix or city code is used, the leading zeroes are added after the prefix or city code and before the publication number digits. (See more about leading zeroes immediately following.)

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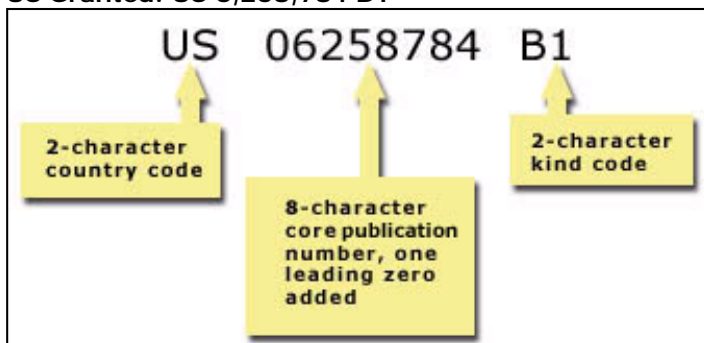
Leading zeroes for publication numbers with fewer than 12 characters:

The following examples demonstrate the use of leading zeroes to build a publication number out to the 12-character Delphion minimum. In each of the examples, the publication number is first shown exactly as it appears in the source patent document.

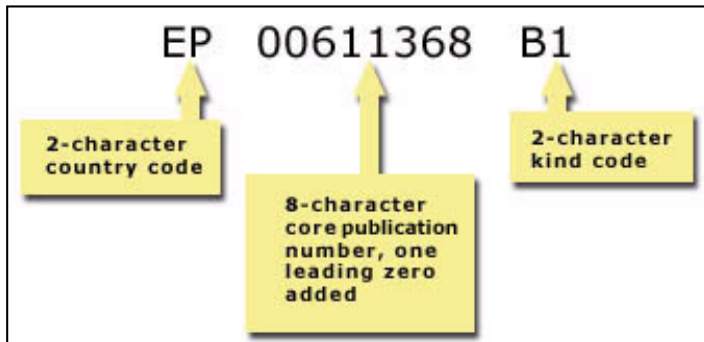
When searching for patents by publication number, commas, spaces, and slashes should be omitted from your queries.

These examples are taken from the US Granted and EP Granted collections, but other collections also have publication numbers with fewer than 12 characters.

US Granted: US 6,258,784 B1



EP Granted: EP 0 611 368 B1



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Compression rules for pre-2010 publication numbers exceeding 12 characters:

For documents published prior to 2010 with publication numbers exceeding 12 characters, the publication numbers are reduced to 12 characters for internal processing in Delphion. (The best

way to search for these numbers is to use one of the search fields designed specifically for publication number searching — these fields are tolerant of publication number format differences.)

When searching text fields (or manually entering publication numbers to create work files) for records published *prior to 2010*, you must compress the publication numbers (to 12 characters) using the rules shown following.

Please remember that this compression process is only necessary in the following situation: documents published prior to 2010 with publication numbers exceeding 12 characters, when you are searching via text fields (it is not necessary when searching via designated publication number search field).

Collection*	Characters in original format	Compression rule / method	Original number example	Compressed number example
US Applications	15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remove the middle two zeroes in the year (the first four characters) Remove the zero immediately following the year 	US20020035272A1	US22035272A1
PAJ (Patent Abstracts of Japan)	14	Remove the middle two zeroes in the year (which is the first four characters)	JP2001000859A2	JP21000859A2
WIPO	14 (beginning in 2003)	Remove the middle two zeroes in the year (which is the first four characters)	WO2009132364A2	WO29132364A2
German Granted	16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Replace the 2-digit IP type indicator with the 1-character alpha equivalent Omit the first 3 characters of the year 	DE602008000195C0	DEX8000195C0
INPADOC / Mexico	14	Remove the year (which follows the country code)	MX2006PA10872A	MXPA610872A

*When searching for publication numbers in Derwent, these same rules and guidelines apply.

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Step-by-step publication number searching:

On the Quick/Number form

The Publication Number search field on the Quick/Number form is shown following.

Text Search Search	
Enter search word or phrase: <input type="text"/>	
elevator robot twin-engine Smith John bee culture	
Select collection(s): <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> US (Granted) <input type="checkbox"/> US (Applications) <input type="checkbox"/> European (Granted) <input type="checkbox"/> European (Applications) <input type="checkbox"/> WIPO PCT Publications <input type="checkbox"/> Abstracts of Japan <input type="checkbox"/> German (Granted) [†] <input type="checkbox"/> German (Applications) [†] <input type="checkbox"/> INPADOC	For US, EP, German and PCT: <input checked="" type="radio"/> Front pages <input type="radio"/> Full text including claims For all collections: <input type="checkbox"/> Limit to an inventor or company Collection details Dates of coverage
OR	
Publication Number Search Search	
Choose country:	Enter number:
<input type="text" value="US United States of America"/>	<input type="text"/>
Number Searching	Examples

To search by publication number from the Quick/Number form,

1. See the **Publication Number** area on the form.
2. Select the issuing country/authority in the **drop-down box**.
3. Enter the publication number in the **entry box**.
Note: Enter numerals and prefixes (when appropriate) only, do not enter the country code or the kind code.
4. Click the **Search** button located directly next to the number entry box.

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On the Advanced form

The **Publication Number** search field on the Advanced form is shown following.

Date & Code Fields		Search
IPC Code:	<input type="text"/>	Browse IPCs
Limit to	A61K 039/205 A61K*	About IPC-R
Filed Date:	From: year month day To: year month day	
Application Number:	<input type="text"/>	Number Searching
	US2001000760007 WO2000SE0002001	
Priority Date:	From: year month day To: year month day	
Priority Number:	<input type="text"/>	Number Searching
	DE1979002928352 US2000000526380	
Priority Country:	<input type="text"/>	
	US NL AND DE GB	
Designated Country:	<input type="text"/>	
	CH AND (NL, DE, GB, FR) JP	
Publication Number:	<input type="text"/>	Number Searching
	US06258784_ WO00202098A2 JP21000859A2	
Kind:	<input type="text"/> Kind Codes	
Related Applications:	<input type="text"/>	Number Searching
	US1986000850145 US04717720_ 1987-11-16	
Other Abstracts:	<input type="text"/>	
	CHEMABS 110 07 CHEMABS* DERABS C2000-01330	
ECLA Code:	<input type="text"/>	
	B65H29/12 B65H29*	

To search by publication number from the Advanced form,

1. At the top of the form, select the collection you want to search.
2. Scroll down to the **Date & Code Fields** section.
3. Enter the full publication number in the **Publication Number** field.
NOTE: Enter the country code, any appropriate prefixes. The kind code is optional.
4. Click any of the **Search** buttons on the form.

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On the Boolean form

The **Pub Number** and **Pub Number only** search fields on the Boolean form are shown following.

Search Fields
Clear Search

	All Fields	
and	All Fields	
and	Inventor	
and	Assignee	
	Title	
	Abstract	
	Claims (US, EP or PCT)	
	Title, Abstract or Claims	
	Description (US, EP or PCT)	
	Publication Number	
	Publication Number only	
	Application Number	

Select coll

US (Grants)

US (Applications)

European (Granted)

European (Applications)

WIPO PCT Publications

Abstracts of Japan

German (Granted)[†]

German (Applications)[†]

INPADOC

[Collection details](#)

[Dates of coverage](#)

For US, EP, German and PCT:

Front pages

Full text including claims

For INPADOC:

All countries (or choose one)

Set range for: Publication Date

From: year month day

To: year month day

Show: Thumbnail Title Derwent Title Abstract Assignee

Pub. Date Filed Priority Date IPC Code Score

Sort by: Score **Items per page:** 20 [\[Check all \]](#)

To search by publication number from the Boolean form,

1. In the first **All Fields** selection box, select to search either **Pub Number** or **Pub Number only**.
2. If using **Pub Number**, enter the full 12-digit publication number, including country code and any appropriate prefixes. The kind code is optional.
3. If using **Pub Number only**, enter the publication number without the country code or the kind code, but do include any prefixes.
4. Use the selection boxes to indicate the collection you want to search and whether you want front pages or full text. You can also use the date fields to better target your query.
5. Click **Search**.

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