

## 5 Free Ways to Find Patents from Your Inventor Ancestor

I knew that my Dad had several patents, and that his grandfather possibly held one or two. So a few years ago I started searching and found two additional ancestors that had filed for and gotten approved a few more patents. I would suggest that you search these five free databases that have patent documents from all over the world. You just might be surprised!

**Google Patents Search** – is generally the “go to” website to search for patents. It has over 18 million documents and has patent documents world-wide, not just the U.S. It gets the nod over the US Patent Office because older patents are text-searchable with Google Patents and are not via the USPTO. Google Patents has documents starting from 1790.

Just go to <https://patents.google.com/> It is free.

**U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO)** – One can search for patents via text for patent documents newer than 1976. But if you have the Patent number, you can get the image online for patents older than 1976. To be more specific for patents prior to 1976, Patents from 1790 through 1975 are searchable only by Issue Date, Patent Number, and Current US Classification.

Just go to <https://patft.uspto.gov/netahtml/PTO/search-bool.html> It is free.

**European Patent Office** – Espacenet provides free access to over 130 million patent documents from 1782 to the present. It includes patents from the U.S., as well as world-wide.

Just go to <https://worldwide.espacenet.com/> It is free.

**The World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)** – Has a service called PATENTSCOPE that provides search of 100 million patent documents including 4.2 million published international patent applications.

Just go to <https://www.wipo.int/patentscope/en/> It is free.

**LENS** – is a scholarly database that serves over [225+ million scholarly works](#), [127+ million global patent records](#), and more than [370+ million patent sequences](#). There are over 136 million Patent Records from 106 jurisdictions around the world.

Just go to <https://www.lens.org/lens/search/patent/structured> It is free.

Try out one or more of these databases. You might be pleasantly surprised like I was!

