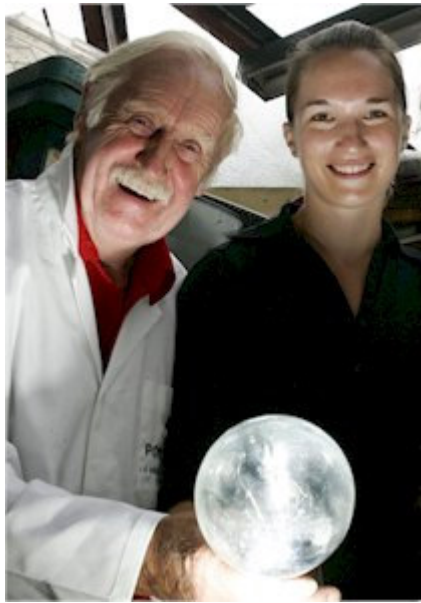


Our Top Ten Tips for Inventors



Coming up with a brilliant idea is by far the easiest part of the invention process. Developing that brainwave and turning it into a successful, moneymaking product can prove to be a minefield. Here Trevor Baylis and patent expert Charlie Ashworth offer advice on how to avoid the pitfalls that often beset first-time inventors...

One of the most important things to do before spending time and money is to check that the idea is new, that it is technically practical, and that there is a potential market for the idea. [Our service](#) provides a very cost-effective way of finding out whether these things are true for your idea or business. We can research the idea and report the results for a low fixed price that represents tremendous value for money.

Have a look at our [Inventor Pack](#). Its free to download and you can use it to record the basic information about your idea. Just click on Trevor's picture above. When you are ready just send it in and we will do the rest!

Ten Important Things to Do!

1. **Keep it to yourself!** - One of the most tempting things to do if you've just come up with an ingenious new invention is to go down the pub and tell your friends without even a whiff of a confidentiality agreement. Not only does this make your idea liable to be stolen, you will also not be able to patent it, as it will be considered to have entered the public domain. Our [Inventor Pack](#) contains a typical Confidentiality Agreement that you can adapt.

2. **Do your research** - So many people come to us with an invention without having dared to find out if it's been done before - sometimes we type a 'new' idea into Google and it's the first result. Spend a little time having a look yourself . Our service includes a complete Patent Search of all the online Patent Databases to find similar ideas to yours. By finding out what the competition is you are in a much better position to improve your idea and sell it successfully.

3. **Beware of corporations** - It may also be tempting to take your idea to one of the big companies - for example, take your improved lawn-mowing device to one of the large garden machinery brands - but many of them won't sign a confidentiality agreement. Without this you are in danger of losing the rights to your idea. We can help you approach large companies. We have negotiated non-disclosure agreements with over 400 companies, but it is vital to assure them that you want to discuss a well researched idea.

4. **Don't fear lawyers** - All patent attorneys will offer a free half-hour confidential consultation in which they will quickly offer invaluable advice about your invention and the patent implications. The Chartered Institute of Patent Attorneys (www.cipa.org.uk) can provide you with a list of registered lawyers. This can be an excellent way of quickly finding out whether your idea is likely to be patentable. They will have had long experience of dealing with new ideas and they will take you seriously.

5. **Make sure it can be built** - If a picture is worth a thousand words, then a prototype is worth a million. It makes it a lot easier for people to work out what your invention is if they can see and touch it. But don't spend money on making a prototype until you are really sure that you can protect the idea and that there is a market for it! As part of our [service](#) we can give you our opinion on whether the idea is technically possible. Even if it doesn't work in its original form, we may be able to suggest improvements or alternative technologies that could make it work. If it is really high technology then we can use our contacts in the Universities and Research Institutions to advise us.

6. **Don't waste your money** - We know of people who have spent hundreds of thousands of pounds on patents, lawyers and manufacturing, without ever checking whether it was a new idea or whether anybody would actually want to buy the thing. Just because your family and friends say they would use your invention doesn't necessarily mean that anybody else will. Always do your market research on strangers to see if it would sell. Our [low cost service](#) helps you avoid this risk. For one simple fixed fee we can give you our opinion whether it is worth going ahead.

7. **Patent, patent, patent** - In the UK, the first to file a patent gets the right to that invention (in the US it's the first to invent). If the costs of a patent attorney (which can come to thousands of pounds) are outside your means, it may be worth drawing up a rough patent anyway and filing it. In the UK, it's free for the first year, and this means you will have that date logged. As part of our [service](#) we will tell you if there are any competing patents. This is so that you don't waste time by filing for a patent that can't be granted. Armed with this knowledge you can adapt your idea to improve the chances of a patent being granted to you.

8. **Follow the four golden patent rules** - The UK Intellectual Property Office will only grant you a patent if you can prove the following:

1. your invention must be new and must not already exist anywhere else in the world;
2. it must 'involve an inventive step' – similar to the first rule. The invention must be an original way to solve a problem that wouldn't be obvious to someone who knows about the subject;
3. it must 'be capable of industrial application' and actually have a real, practical use;
4. and it must not be a specifically excluded subject such as a business method or a piece of software.

The test for obviousness is the trickiest of all the rules. It tests whether your invention is obvious 'to a person with ordinary skill in the field at the time of the invention'. In other words you'll be safer if it provides a solution to a problem in an offbeat way. The courts would say it 'teaches away' from prior knowledge. This is the measure a patent attorney would be able to judge best. As part of our service our own Patent Attorneys can help with advice on these things.

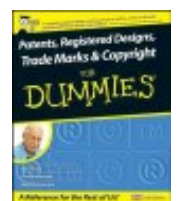
9. **Registered designs & trade marks: could be better**- If a patent is not appropriate, a registered design or trade mark can be a much cheaper way to protect the appearance of your idea or your business or product name, slogan or logo. Registering your company name with Companies House is not the same as registering a Trade Mark and a web site name (URL) has no legal standing in protecting a name or brand. The value of many large organisations is in the goodwill in their brand names, not the technology in their business. This is especially true of service and software businesses. The reports from our [service](#) will tell you if we think that this would be a better way to go.

10. **Stay positive!** - While all these legal complications can seem overwhelming, inventing is a wonderful thing, and the perfect way to escape the drudgery of a 9-to-5 job. A healthy dose of enthusiasm and genuine belief in your idea (as well as a touch of arrogance) can do wonders for you, and for your invention. Don't forget that [our service](#) can help you overcome any difficulties and give you an honest review of the strengths and weaknesses of your idea. Download one of our [Inventor Packs](#) to find out more.

TREVOR BAYLIS & CHARLIE ASHWORTH

Trevor Baylis Brands plc

To find out a lot more about this whole process why not get the book written by Charlie and our experts. Its a low cost way of getting some real expert help. Patents, Registered Designs, Trade Marks & Copyright is published by Wiley and Sons and is available from most good book shops or from the Trevor Baylis Brands web site.



Trevor Baylis Brands plc.

Email: business@trevorbaylisbrands.com

Phone: 05601 290240