

Table 1: History of the patent system, important inventions and historical events

Time	Development Steps in Patent Law	Historical Events
1280s		Eyeglasses in North Italy
1311	<i>Letter of Patent</i> First letter of patent issued in England.	
1338		'The Hundred Years' War' began
1450s		Gutenberg's movable type print
1431		Jeanne d'Arc burned at Rouen
1455		The War of the Roses began
1474	<i>Venetian Senate's Act</i> The first administered patent system. Inventions only had to be registered, no formal examination took place.	
1492		Columbus discovered America
16th cent.	<i>German Kingdoms</i> Some of the German princes widely used patents, their patent system was well developed economically.	
1517		Luther proclaimed his theses
1609		Microscope
1609		Reign of James I. began
1618		The 'Thirty Year's War' began
1620		The Mayflower reached Plymouth Rock
1623	<i>Statute of Monopolies:</i> The Statute of Monopolies recognizes patents as an exception to the rule against monopolies. The utility requirement appears and 14 years of protection are granted.	
1642	<i>Industrial Revolution</i> The 'written description' requirement was strengthened shifting attention from novel arts and technologies to the underlying knowledge.	Reign of Louis XIV began

Table 1: (continued)

<i>Time</i>	<i>Development Steps in Patent Law</i>	<i>Historical Events</i>
1789 1791		French Revolution (1789) Steamboat
1834	<i>Zollverein</i> A customs union between Prussia and most other German states except Austria was established. Revision of the US Patent Act A formal examination procedure was introduced. The 'non-obviousness' requirement was introduced.	Safety matches
mid 19th century 1849		Safety pin
1850	<i>Switzerland</i> Switzerland abandoned the patent system and only reinforced it in 1907.	Vacuum cleaner
1869	<i>Netherlands</i> The Netherlands abandon the patent system until 1912.	German Empire under King Wilhelm I Metal detector
1871 1881		
1883	<i>Paris Convention</i> Established to help in obtaining global patent protection. 'National treatment' was introduced.	
1922 1953		Radar Maser
1970	<i>European Patent Convention</i> Establishment of the European Patent Office. The EPO issues patents on behalf of the European Union Members.	
1972		Computed Tomography
1978	<i>Patent Cooperation Treaty</i> Came into full force. International application procedure created.	

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<i>Time</i>	<i>Development Steps in Patent Law</i>	<i>Historical Events</i>
1982	<i>Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit</i> The CAFC was created.	
1993 1995	<i>TRIPs</i> As part of the WTO Agreement in the Uruguay Round. Harmonizing standards on a minimum level in all members of the GATT.	GPS