

Forms of Intellectual Property (IP) in Canada

Type of IP Right	Protects	Registration	Relative Cost	Duration
Patent (US – Utility Patent)	Inventions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Machines • Compositions • Processes/methods • Useful improvements 	Yes	Expensive	20 years from filing
Copyright	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literary works (books, software) • Dramatic works (movies, plays) • Artistic works (photos, drawings) • Compilations (databases) • Musical works 	Optional	Inexpensive	Life of author + 50 years following end of that calendar year
Industrial Design (US – Design Patent)	How something looks (its appearance)	Yes	Moderate	15 years
Trademark	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brand names • Phrases • Logos • Web addresses • Distinctive designs or symbols 	Optional	Inexpensive	10 years and renewable
Trade Secret	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formulas • Processes • Designs • Recipes • Customer and supply lists not publicly disclosed 	No	Inexpensive to Expensive	Indefinite until publicly disclosed