

MEMORANDUM ON DRAWINGS FOR PATENT APPLICATIONS*

*Based on Chapter 5, "The Drawings" of the PCT Applicant's Guide updated 31.10.2014, see http://www.wipo.int/pct/en/appguide/text.jsp?page=ip05.html#_drawings

Drawings are:

Perspectives, exploded views, sections and cross-sections, photographs, chemical and mathematical formulas, flow sheets and diagrams, such as functional diagrams and graphic representations of a given phenomenon which express the relationship between two or more parameters.

Drawings in the description:

Chemical or mathematical formulae and tables may be included in the description, claims or abstract; they are not considered drawings and are thus not subject to the same requirements as drawings. However, if submitted as drawings they are subject to the same requirements as drawings.

When to submit drawings?

– only if necessary, save time and money

The international application must contain drawings when necessary for the understanding of the invention. (the less the better)

Presentation of drawings

– on separate sheets

Drawings must be presented on one or more separate sheets. Exploded views, with the separated parts of the same figure embraced by a bracket, to show the relationship or order of assembly of various parts, are permissible.

Margins and frames

– margins must be met

The sheets (always A4 format) must not contain frames around the usable surface. The minimum margins are: top and left side: 2.5 cm; right side: 1.5 cm; bottom: 1.0 cm.

Text matter in drawings

– no text matter unless indispensable

Drawings must not contain text matter except a single word or words when absolutely indispensable, such as "water," "steam," "open," "closed," "section on AB" and in the case of electric circuits and block schematic or flow sheet diagrams, a few short catch words indispensable for understanding.

Arrangement of drawings

– grouped, upright (if feasible)

The drawings must be grouped together on a sheet or sheets without waste of space, but clearly separated from each other. (no separation by lines)

All figures of the drawings should be set out upright on the sheets if possible, alternatively they may be placed sideways with the tops of the drawings on the left-hand side of the sheet.

Numbering of drawings – all sheets must be numbered

All sheets must be numbered in the centre of the top (preferred) or the bottom but not in the margin in numbers larger than those used as reference signs.

The number of each sheet of the drawings must consist of two Arabic numerals separated by an oblique stroke, e.g. “2/5” for the second sheet of five sheets and “1/1” for a single sheet.

Numbering of Figures on sheets – Fig. no.

E.g. Fig., Fig. 1, Fig. 7B, etc. with Arabic numerals.

Execution of drawings – black lines, no colors

The drawings must be executed in durable, black, uniformly thick and well-defined lines and strokes.

Numbers, letters, symbols – min. 0.32 cm

Use Arabic and Greek alphabet, reference signs must be used in a manner which is consistent as between the description, claims and drawings. In particular, reference signs not mentioned in the description must not appear in the drawings, and vice versa. Known devices may be illustrated by symbols with a universally recognized conventional meaning that are generally accepted in the art. Indications such as “actual size” or “scale ½” on the drawings or in the description, are not permitted, since these lose their meaning with reproduction in different format. The Greek alphabet is to be accepted, however, where it is customarily used, for example, to indicate angles, wavelengths, etc.

Colors and shading – no colors, spaced lines for shading

Shading in figures is allowed provided it assists their understanding and does not impede legibility. Only spaced lines may be used for shading, not fully blacked out areas. These lines must be thin, as few in number as possible and they must contrast with the rest of the drawings.

Photographs – black & white

Photographs are allowed, must be black and white and must admit for direct reproduction.

Practical advice

If necessary, you can do wonders with a black ball-point pen, scissors, transparent adhesive tape, white cover up tape and a good copying machine.

Last resort advice

You probably have the whole priority year to fix the drawings, but don't ever amend them (add features or words) or you will lose the priority date on the drawings!

Fig. 1A

As little figures as possible (indispensable for understanding)

As many figures on one page as possible (saves money)

No colors, black lines only, no text except "key words"

Margins are: top and left side: 2.5 cm; right side: 1.5 cm; bottom: 1.0 cm

No shades of grey, shading by spaced lines only

Fig. 1B



Fig. 1C

