

# Formatting Japanese Numbers for Searching on Questel•Orbit

## Introduction

Japanese publication and application numbers can be a challenge to search in online databases for more than one reason. Often, only a minimal amount of information is available as a starting point. Additionally, the Japanese Patent Office publishes unexamined and examined publications, as well as granted patents.

When inputting a Japanese publication number, the publication year must be included along with the country code (JP) and the publication number itself. Prior to Y2K (2000) there are two ways the publication year is calculated: the year as we know it (Western year) and the year of the Japanese Emperor. It is very helpful to know whether you are searching for an unexamined or examined number so that you know which type of year to use. If you are not sure of whether or not the publication you are looking for is unexamined or examined, it may be necessary to input the number both ways. The same series of numbers are used for the unexamined and examined publications, so formatting of the number along with correct input of the Japanese or Western year is crucial. Beginning in 2000, Japanese publication numbers are searched with the Western four (4) number year.

Use this step-by-step guide to lead you through the process of formatting Japanese numbers for searching on Questel•Orbit.

## A Short Summary

In short, use the year of the Emperor (Imperial year) for unexamined or “A” publications. Use the Western year for examined or “B” publications. See page 5 for the Japanese Imperial/Western Year Conversion Table.

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## Tips and Strategies

Check if there is an **A, B, B2, C** or **U** with Japanese (JP) patent number;  
 Check if the words **Kokai, Koho, Toroku** or **Jitsuyo** appear with JP patent number;  
 Check if there is no dash in the JP number (choose strategy 3 or 6) :

### Examples p.4

- if **A, A2, Kokai**
- if **B, B2, B4, Koho** and date is < 1996.05.29
- if **B2, Toroku** and date is => 1996.05.29 (no dash in number)
- if you have JP priority / application number
- if **U, Jitsuyo**
- if **C** (continuous number - no dash)

### Files

Strategy 1 or	<b>PLUSPAT, DWPI, INPD, JAPIO</b>	SS 1,5,7
Strategy 2 or	<b>PLUSPAT, DWPI, INPD</b>	SS 2
Strategy 3 or	<b>PLUSPAT, DWPI, INPD</b>	SS 3
Strategy 4 or	<b>PLUSPAT, DWPI, INPD, JAPIO</b>	SS 4,6
Strategy 5 or	<b>PLUSPAT, DWPI, INPD</b>	SS 8
Strategy 6	<b>PLUSPAT</b>	SS 9,10

<b>Strategy 1</b> <b>Japanese Patent</b> <i>A document (unexamined JP document)</i>	<b>Japanese Patent</b> <b>Number</b>	<b>Standard Format</b> <b>JPYYNNNNNN/pn</b>
Pre Y2K Format the number as follows: <b>JPYYNNNNNN/pn</b> where: <b>JP</b> Country Code for Japan <b>YY</b> two year digits preceding the dash in a JP patent number (add leading zero where one digit) <b>NNNNNN</b> number series following the dash in a JP patent number (fill with leading zeros where less than 6 digits) <b>/pn</b> publication/patent number qualifier 2000 onwards /pn Format the number as follows: <b>JPYYYYNNNNNN/pn</b>	<b>50-2</b>  <b>63-9997</b>  <b>1-111100</b>  <b>4-72717</b>  <b>Beginning 2000</b>	<b>JP50000002/pn</b>  <b>JP63099997/pn</b>  <b>JP01111100/pn</b>  <b>JP04072717/pn</b>  <b>JPYYYYNNNNNN/pn</b> <b>JP2000245192/pn</b>
<b>Strategy 2</b> <i>B document (old-law examined JP document)</i> Use same format as above: <b>JPYYNNNNNN/pn</b> where: <b>YY</b> two year digits preceding the dash in a JP patent number is <b>converted to western year</b> (Same year date as on JP patent, see the conversion table)	<b>50-2</b> <i>(50+25=75 see table)</i>  <b>4-72717</b> <i>(4+88=92 see table)</i>	<b>JP75000002/pn</b>  <b>JP92072717/pn</b>
<b>Strategy 3</b> <i>'New' B2 document (new-law granted JP document)</i> Reformat the number as follows: <b>JPNNNNNNN/pn</b> where: <b>NNNNNNN</b> seven digit series continuous - w/o date digits starting <b>JP2500001 1996.05.29 (no dash in number)</b>	<b>25000002</b>	<b>JP2500002/pn</b>  <b>JP2682524/pn</b>

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Strategy 4</b> <i>Priority/Application number for JP patent</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Japanese Patent</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Standard Format</b></p>
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p>Reformat the number as follows:  <b>YYYYJP-NNNNNNN/ap/pr</b>            where:  <b>YYYY</b> 4-digit year preceeding the dash in a JP patent number is <i>converted to western year</i> (Or same year date as JP <i>filing</i> Or application date )  <b>NNNNNNN</b> 7-digit number series following the dash in a JP <i>filing</i> number (fill with leading zeros where less than 7 digits)</p> </div>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>50-2</b> <i>(50+25=75 see table)</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>4-72717</b> <i>(4+88=92 see table)</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">1975JP-0000002/ap/pr</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1992JP-0072718/ap/pr</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Strategy 5</b> <i>Search JP Priority Application number with U code</i></p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p><b>You must have the Priority Appl Number - cannot use publication number.</b>            No JP Utility Models in files yet.            Search for Non-JP equivalent  <b>YYYYJP-UNNNNNN/pr</b>            where:  <b>YYYY</b> two year digits preceeding the dash in a JP priority application number is <i>converted to western year</i>  <b>U</b> Utility Model Indicator  <b>NNNNNN</b> number series following the dash in a JP <i>priority filing</i> number (fill with leading zeros after U where less than 7 digits including U)</p> </div>	<p style="text-align: center;">47-482</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">1972JP-U000482/pr</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Strategy 6</b> <i>Search as C document (old-law granted JP document)</i></p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p>C patent numbers are available in <b>PLUSPAT</b> database.  <b>JPNNNNNN/pn</b> or <b>JPNNNNNNN/pn</b>            where:  <b>NNNNNN</b> six/seven digits series continuous - w/o date digits starting <i>JP746395 C 741023</i> ending <i>JP2056872 C 960523</i>.  <i>(No dash in number)</i></p> </div>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>746395</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>2056872 c</b> 960523</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">JP746395/pn</p> <p style="text-align: center;">JP2056872/pn</p>

## Sample Records Display

### file PLUSPAT

1 - **JP50000002/pn** - 1  
2/2 PLUSPAT - (C) QUESTEL-ORBIT  
PN - JP50000002 A 19750106 [JP50000002]  
AP - JP12637873 19731112 [1973JP-0126378]  
PR - US30608672 19721113 [1972US-0306086]  
IC - (A) C10M-001/18  
STG - (A) Doc. Laid open to publ. Inspec.

2 - **JP75000002/pn** - 1  
1/1 PLUSPAT - (C) QUESTEL-ORBIT  
PN - JP50000002 B 19750106 [JP75000002]  
AP - JP8153469 19691014 [1969JP-0081534]  
PR - JP8153469 19691014 [1969JP-0081534]  
STG - (B) Publd. Examined patent applic.

3 - **JP2500002/pn** - 1  
1/2 PLUSPAT - (C) QUESTEL-ORBIT  
PN - JP5185241 A 19930727 [JP05185241]  
PN2 - JP2500002 B2 19960529 [JP2500002]  
TI - (A) LAP RESISTANCE WELDING MACHINE  
PA - (A) KAWASAKI STEEL CO  
IN - (A) TAKEZAWA KOHEI; IDA YUKIO  
AP - JP578492 19920116 [1992JP-0005784]  
PR - JP578492 19920116 [1992JP-0005784]  
IC - (B2) B21B-015/00 B23K-011/06 B23K011/24  
STG - (A) Doc. Laid open to publ. Inspec.  
STG2- (B2) Grant. Pat. With A from 2500000 on

4 - **1975JP-0000002/ap/pr** - 1  
1/1 PLUSPAT - (C) QUESTEL-ORBIT  
PN - JP51079683 A 19760712 [JP51079683]  
PA - (A) KOJIMA KATSUYOSHI  
IN - (A) KOJIMA KATSUYOSHI  
AP - JP275 19750104 [1975JP-0000002]  
PR - JP275 19750104 [1975JP-0000002]  
IC - (A) C25B-009/00  
STG - (A) Doc. Laid open to publ. Inspec.

5 - **JP04072717/pn** - 1  
1/1 PLUSPAT - (C) QUESTEL-ORBIT  
PN - JP4072717 A 19920306 [JP04072717]  
TI - (A) SEMICONDUCTOR MANUFACTURING DEVICE  
PA - (A) MATSUSHITA ELECTRIC IND CO LTD  
IN - (A) OTSUKA NOBUYUKI; TAKENAKA NAOKI; OSHIMA MASA AKI  
AP - JP18592790 19900713 [1990JP-0185927]

PR - JP18592790 19900713 [1990JP-0185927]  
IC - (A) G05D-007/06 G05D-016/06 H01L-021/205  
STG - (A) Doc. Laid open to publ. Inspec.

6 - **1972JP-U000482/pr** - 1  
1/1 PLUSPAT - (C) QUESTEL-ORBIT  
PN - AT1073573 A 19750815 [AT7310735]  
PN2 - AT330037 B 19760610 [AT-330037]  
OTI - (A) FERSENSKIBINDUNG  
PA - (A) HOPE KK (JP)  
PA2 - (B) HOPE KK (JP)  
AP - AT1073573 19731221 [1973AT-0010735]  
PR - JP48272U 19721225 [1972JP-U000482]  
IC - (B) A63C-009/084  
BC - A63C-009/084  
STG - (A) Laid open patent application  
STG2- (B) Patent

7 - **JP746395/pn** - 1  
1/1 PLUSPAT - (C) QUESTEL-ORBIT  
PN - JP48061717 A 19730829 [JP48061717]  
PN2 - JP49008811 B 19740228 [JP74008811]  
PN3 - JP746395 C 19741023 [JP-746395]  
AP - JP9594171 19711130 [1971JP-0095941]  
PR - JP9594171 19711130 [1971JP-0095941]  
STG - (A) Doc. Laid open to publ. Inspec.  
STG2- (B) Publd. Examined patent applic.  
STG3- (C) Granted patent from 1000001 onwards

8 - **JP2056872/pn** - 1  
1/1 PLUSPAT - (C) QUESTEL-ORBIT  
PN - JP48061717 A 19730829 [JP48061717]  
PN2 - JP49008811 B 19740228 [JP74008811]  
PN3 - JP746395 C 19741023 [JP-746395]  
AP - JP9594171 19711130 [1971JP-0095941]  
PR - JP9594171 19711130 [1971JP-0095941]  
STG - (A) Doc. Laid open to publ. Inspec.  
STG2- (B) Publd. Examined patent applic.  
STG3- (C) Granted patent from 1000001 onwards

# Japanese Imperial / Western Year Conversion Table

Emperor Era	For A unexamined / Kokai patents use <b>Imperial Year</b>	For B examined (old law) / Koho patents use <b>Western Year</b>
SHOWA (Hirohito) 1926-1989	<p>1 ↓ 38 ↓ 64</p> <p><b>Add +25</b> to get western yr.</p> <p><i>Database coverage :</i></p>	<p><b>Subtract</b> -25 to get Imperial yr.</p> <p>1926 ↓ 1963 ↓ 1989 (09.01.89)</p> <p><i>WPAT 1963 (chem.) INPD 1974 JAPIO 1976 (A docs)</i></p>
HEISEI (Akihito) 1989-1999	<p>1 ↓ 5 ↓ 11</p> <p><b>Add +88</b> to get western yr.</p>	<p><b>Subtract -</b> 88 to get Imperial yr.</p> <p>1989 ↓ 1993 ↓ 1999</p>

A	Unexamined publication (old & new law)	<b>Kokai</b> Tokkyo Koho
B2/B4	Examined publication (old law)	Tokkyo <b>Koho</b>
C	Granted patent (old law)	
B2	Granted patent (new law)	<b>Toroku</b>
U	Utility model applications Unexamined	Kokai <b>Jitsuyo</b>
Y2	Utility model applications Examined	<b>Jitsuyo</b> koho
	Designs	<b>Isho</b> koho