



How to check for existing designs

There are two good reasons why it pays to check if your design is original before you apply for design registration or before you market your design:

1. There is no point in applying for design registration or investing further in a design if it is not original or may be seen as confusingly similar to a registered design;
2. The owner of a registered design can take legal action against anyone trying to market an identical or similar design.

How can I check that my design is new and original?

Start by [searching the IPONZ online database of registered designs](#) for similar or identical designs.

See our [practice guideline on Design Classification](#) for information about searching by class.

If you are unable to carry out your own search you can take advantage of these two FREE services:

1. **“Request for Information”**. Use [Design Form 27](#) if you have a particular registered design number you would like to inspect, or [Design Form 28](#) if you have a drawing or picture of a design you would like to inspect that may be registered. We will search the currently registered designs in New Zealand and advise you of any relevant registrations, including the name and address of the proprietor; what articles the registration protects; and the date and term of the registration.
2. **“Request for Search”**. Use [Design Form 29](#) to request an elementary check to determine whether the drawing or picture you supply of your design is the same as or similar to any other currently registered design.

NOTE: Filing a request for information or search does not replace an application for registration of your design. See [how to apply](#) for more details.