

Classifying goods or services

Note: for more information, please see our detailed guide [03 Classification and specification](#).

What is a specification?

When you apply to register a trade mark you must include a list of all goods and/or services for which you want to use the mark. This is called a specification of goods or services.

What is classification?

In addition to listing all of the goods or services for which you want to use the mark please also list the class or classes that the goods or services fall in. This is referred to as the classification of your goods or services.

1. Specification

The specification of goods or services is a description of the goods or services for which you are using, or intend to use, the mark.

When deciding on what to include in your specification of goods or services, please consider the following:

- You must have an honest intention to trade in all of the goods or services
- Your list of goods or services must be clear so that anyone looking at the trade mark database will be able to understand the exact nature of the goods or services. For example, please avoid using vague terms such as “etc” in your specification
- A specification is a description of “what” you trade in. As such it is not necessary to provide information on “how” the trade mark is to be used. For example, please avoid providing superfluous information such as “the trade mark will be used on a label” or “the trade mark will be used on a letterhead” in your specification

Please note the following examples of clear and concise goods and services specifications:

1. clothing
2. wholesale and retail of clothing
3. café services
4. cosmetics including moisturisers, make-up and lipstick
5. provision of a training course in relation to horseback riding
6. temporary accommodation services, namely bed and breakfast services

2. Classification

Now that you have decided what your specification of goods or services will contain, you need to classify your specification of goods or services.

Classification is the term used to describe the system of categorising goods and services of a similar kind into classes for ease of identification and searching. New Zealand follows an international classification system called the International Classification of Goods and Services (currently the 9th edition of the Nice Classification, introduced on 1 January 2007), which is published by the [World Intellectual Property Organisation \(WIPO\)](#)¹. This classification system comprises 45 classes. Of those 45 classes, classes 1 to 34 pertain to goods, while classes 35 to 45 pertain to services.

Each trade mark application is for one class only. If you require protection for goods or services in more than one class, each class will require a separate fee.

Please see our [list of class headings](#) to determine what class or classes your goods and services should fall into and/or use the IPONZ online classification database.

Once the Office has received your application we will examine your specification of goods and services and ascertain if you have classified your goods and services correctly. If there is a problem with your specification or if you have put your goods or services in an inappropriate class, we will let you know what you will need to agree to change in order for your application to proceed. In some cases we may ask for further information about a good or service.

Please be aware that if the Office advises you that your goods or services fall into more than one class you may pay an additional fee for a new application for the extra class or classes. Important: Additional classes may only be added within one month from the date the application was filed.

Footnote

¹ Class headings from previous classification systems are attached as Appendices to this guide.

Further information

[Trade mark classes](#)

List of trade mark classes from the International Classification of Goods and Services (currently the 9th edition of the Nice Classification, introduced on 1 January 2007), which is published by the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO).

[Appendix 1 - Applications from January 2002 to 31 December 2006](#)

Applications from January 2002 to 31 December 2006.

[Appendix 2 - Applications from 11 December 1941 to 31 December 2001](#)

Applications from 11 December 1941 to 31 December 2001.

[Appendix 3 - Applications to 10 December 1941](#)

Applications to 10 December 1941.

[Detailed classification for applications from January 1 2007](#)

Detailed Classification for applications from January 1 2007