

# INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY AND TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER

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## WHAT IS A TRADEMARK?

The term "trademark" is often used to refer to any of the four types of marks that can be registered with the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO). The two primary types of marks that can be registered with the USPTO are:

Trademarks - used by their owners to identify goods, that is, physical commodities, which may be natural, manufactured, or produced, and which are sold or otherwise transported or distributed via interstate commerce.

Service marks - used by their owners to identify services, that is, intangible activities, which are performed by one person for the benefit of a person or persons other than himself, either for pay or otherwise.

There are other types of marks that can be registered in the USPTO, but they occur infrequently and have some different requirements for registration than the more commonly applied for trademarks and service marks. They are:

- Certification marks
- Collective marks
- Collective trademarks and collective service marks
- Collective membership marks

PLEASE NOTE: Since the benefits conferred by registration are essentially the same for all types of marks, the term "trademark" is often used in general information that applies to service marks, certification marks, and collective marks as well as to true trademarks (marks used on goods) as defined above.

If you need more information, please visit these websites:

- [U.S. Patent and Trademark Office](#)
  - The most comprehensive website about trademark issues including information about how to apply and to check status of pending and registered trademarks
- [Inventor's Resource Center](#)
  - A great resource for new and established inventors
- [TBR Related Forms](#)

If you wish to discuss your patent issues further, please [CONTACT](#) the staff of the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs or send us an e-mail at [research@mtsu.edu](mailto:research@mtsu.edu)