

**Why Keep a Logbook?**

*Verbatim* text downloaded from [http://inventors.about.com/cs/logbook/ht/Log\\_book.htm](http://inventors.about.com/cs/logbook/ht/Log_book.htm)  
(accessed 6-14-2004)

The patent system in the United States rewards the first person that invents a new product. An inventor's log book helps you prove you were first.

**Here's How:**

1. Detailed records of the concepts, test results and other information related to making an invention should be kept in a log book. You can start from the very first moment you think of an idea.
2. Proper record keeping can be used as proof of the conception date of an invention and to show continuous activity or due diligence. Both are issues that arise during the patent process and a log book can settle such issues.
3. You can buy a specially printed log book or make one yourself. Use a bound notebook, the reason being that pages cannot be added or subtracted without that being evident.
4. Number all your pages consecutively. On any blank pages or portion of a page left, you should draw a line across. Start a new notebook when yours is full. Each notebook should be assigned a consecutive number.
5. Keep your notebooks in a secure location and make records of when you take or return your notebooks from that spot.
6. Every entry should be signed and dated by the participants and if possible, the entry should be signed and dated by an unbiased witness or Notary Public.
7. Use a header for each entry with the following information - date, project no., subject, participant(s), signature(s) and witness(es).
8. The more details the better, make sure that any person with regular knowledge of your invention field could understand what you did.
9. Make records of everything (i.e. all your tests not just the successful ones). Add all your sketches and computations.
10. All participants and their roles for every entry need to be noted. This proves who can be named as inventor(s) on a patent application. If you omit any inventor's name from your patent application it is considered fraud.
11. All loose material, such as drawings, printouts, photographs, etc., should be signed, dated and cross referenced to a particular notebook entry.

**Why Keep a Logbook?**

*Verbatim* text downloaded from [http://inventors.about.com/cs/logbook/ht/Log\\_book.htm](http://inventors.about.com/cs/logbook/ht/Log_book.htm)  
(accessed 6-14-2004)

12. If you can, tape or staple the loose material into the body of the appropriate notebook entry.
13. Anything else such as samples, models, prototypes, etc., should be carefully labeled with a date and cross referenced to notebook entries. Keep all of it.

**Other Tips:**

- Record your date of original conception then keep a detailed record of your invention activities as you develop your ideas into reality. This is called "reduction to practice" in legalese.
- Each invention log book should be witnessed and dated by at least two witnesses upon completion.
- Store your log books in a fireproof safe place. Consider buying a small safe or locked strongbox.

**What You Need:**

- many bound notebooks
- or premade log books
- pens no pencils
- cellophane tape
- stapler