

- I. IPC
- II. FI**
- III. F-term
- IV. Reference tool

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Next, let me explain FI.

FI (File Index) is a domestic classification system developed and maintained by the JPO. It has the following features.

- Hierarchical tree structure which enables subdivision of Subgroups of the International Patent Classification (IPC)
- Assigned **mainly** to the Japanese patent publications and the Japanese utility model gazettes

➤ JPO recently started to assign FIs also to some Chinese documents.

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The FI, or File Index, is a domestic classification system developed and maintained by the JPO.

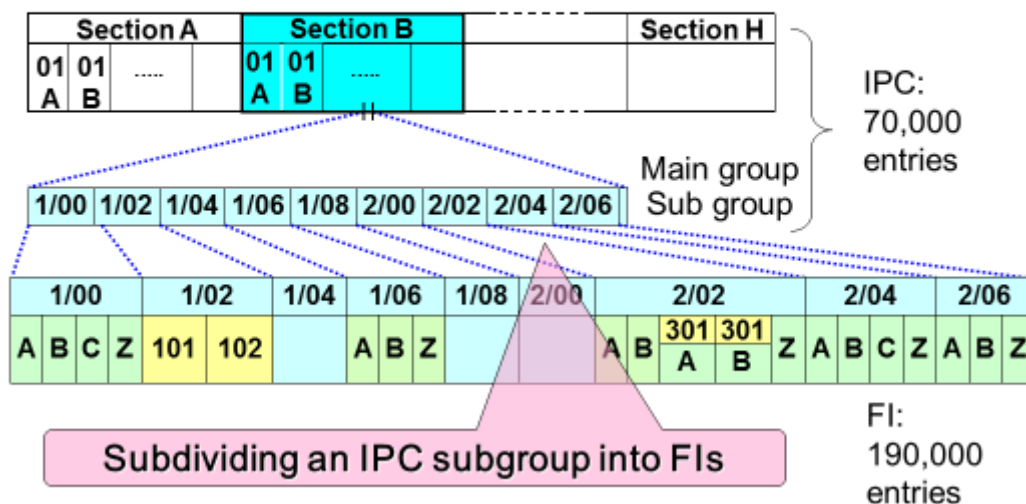
The FI has a hierarchical tree structure and subdivides the IPC into sub-groups.

In other words, all IPC symbols are a subset of the FI.

FIs are assigned mainly to Japanese patent publications and utility model gazettes.

The JPO recently also started to assign FIs to some Chinese documents.

Correspondence between FI and IPC



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This slide illustrates the correspondence between FI and IPC.

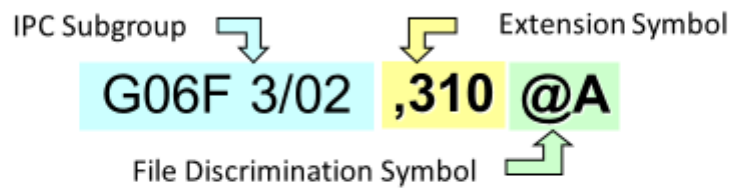
As described in Part I, IPC has a hierarchical structure consisting of sections, classes, and groups.

The sub-group is the smallest component of the IPC.

In rapidly developing technical fields, however, the IPC sub-group is not sufficient to categorize documents effectively.

Therefore, FI was introduced to subdivide and expand IPC sub-groups.

■ General format of FI



■ Other formats of FI

- G06K 9/18 (IPC subgroup *per se*)
- G06K 9/20 @A (no extension symbol)
- G06K 9/20 ,330 (no file discrimination symbol)

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This is the general format of FI.

It includes an extension symbol and a file discrimination symbol.

These were created to expand the hierarchical structure of the IPC.

An extension symbol consists of a three-digit number.

It subdivides the IPC into subgroups.

A file discrimination symbol consists of a single letter.

It subdivides the IPC subgroup or FI with an extension symbol.

In addition to this general format, these three other formats are also acceptable.

Hierarchical dots of FI, e.g., in G06K 9/20

9/20			. Image acquisition
9/20	, 310		. . Mechanisms of character entry units
9/20	, 310	@A	Character entry systems
9/20	, 310	@G	. Structure of photodetectors
9/20	, 310	@H	. . Positioning of photodetectors
9/20	, 330		. . Character reading methods

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This is a sample FI schedule in the subclass G06K.

The blue, yellow, and green areas indicate the IPC subgroup, extension symbol, and file discrimination symbol, respectively.

G06K9/20&310 has two dots in its title.

This indicates that its hierarchical level is lower than G06K9/20.

Here, please **note** that the File Discrimination symbols subdivide entries with extension symbols.

For instance, G06K9/20&310A - &310H are subdivisions of G06K9/20&310.

Although its title has no dot, G06K9/20&310A is located at a lower level than G06K9/20&310.

In other words, the first three hierarchical dots are **hidden** in the G06K9/20&310A - &310H titles.

“Theme” is a unique idea introduced by the JPO in order to categorize FI according to technical relevance.

Each theme is specified by a particular **code** and associated with ranges of FIs.

Range of FI	Theme code
→ G06F 3/01	5E555
G06F 3/02 - 3/027	5B020
G06F 3/03	5B068
G06F 3/033 - 3/041,340	5B087
G06F 3/041,350 - 3/047	5B068
→ G06F 3/048	5E555

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Now I would like to introduce the idea of “themes” as a basis of the “F-term.”

“Theme” is a unique idea introduced by the JPO in order to categorize FI according to technical relevance.

Each theme is specified by a particular **code** and connected with a range of FI.

Please look at this table.

FI entries in the left column are arranged in numerical order and divided into groups.

Theme codes in the right column are not arranged sequentially.

Therefore, if several FIs belong to the same theme, the technical features of each FI are similar.

For example, these FIs relate to the Man Machine Interface technique and belong to the same **theme, which is 5E555.**