

Table 70. Importance of types of intellectual property protections to companies located in the United States that performed or funded R&D, by industry and company size: 2024

(Percent)

Industry and company size	NAICS code	Utility patents			Design patents			Trademarks			Copyrights			Trade secrets			Mask works		
		Very important	Somewhat important	Not important	Very important	Somewhat important	Not important	Very important	Somewhat important	Not important	Very important	Somewhat important	Not important	Very important	Somewhat important	Not important	Very important	Somewhat important	Not important
All industries	21–23, 31–33, 42–81	26.0	20.3	53.7	16.4	23.1	60.6	33.6	32.6	33.9	23.6	29.2	47.2	45.5	23.8	30.7	4.2	10.2	85.7
Manufacturing industries	31–33	33.0	17.4	49.6	21.8	24.6	53.6	36.3	31.4	32.3	22.7	28.9	48.4	49.2	22.7	28.1	5.2	11.0	83.8
Food	311	16.3	8.8	75.0	15.0	12.5	72.5	43.8	25.0	31.3	22.5	23.8	53.8	48.1	21.5	30.4	6.3	5.0	88.8
Beverage and tobacco products	312	7.7	11.5	80.8	7.7	30.8	61.5	61.5	15.4	23.1	34.6	11.5	53.8	50.0	12.5	37.5	0.0	20.0	80.0
Textile, apparel, and leather products	313–316	23.5	29.4	47.1	35.3	29.4	35.3	47.1	29.4	23.5	31.3	37.5	31.3	43.8	31.3	25.0	6.3	12.5	81.3
Wood products	321	22.2	22.2	55.6	12.5	25.0	62.5	33.3	33.3	33.3	22.2	22.2	55.6	37.5	25.0	37.5	11.1	11.1	77.8
Paper	322	25.0	12.5	62.5	12.5	25.0	62.5	37.5	25.0	37.5	14.3	28.6	57.1	37.5	50.0	12.5	11.1	11.1	77.8
Printing and related support activities	323	23.1	23.1	53.8	15.4	30.8	53.8	23.1	38.5	38.5	23.1	30.8	46.2	38.5	23.1	38.5	7.7	7.7	84.6
Petroleum and coal products	324	28.6	28.6	42.9	14.3	28.6	57.1	42.9	28.6	28.6	28.6	28.6	42.9	57.1	14.3	28.6	14.3	14.3	71.4
Chemicals	325	42.7	15.5	41.7	13.2	19.5	67.3	38.0	34.1	27.8	20.0	29.3	50.7	59.4	20.3	20.3	2.9	7.8	89.2
Basic chemicals	3251	28.6	10.7	60.7	10.7	10.7	78.6	31.0	31.0	37.9	13.8	27.6	58.6	48.3	20.7	31.0	3.6	7.1	89.3
Resin, synthetic rubber, and artificial synthetic fibers and filaments	3252	41.7	16.7	41.7	16.7	25.0	58.3	41.7	25.0	33.3	25.0	33.3	41.7	50.0	16.7	33.3	9.1	9.1	81.8
Pesticide, fertilizer, and other agricultural chemicals	3253	37.5	37.5	25.0	22.2	33.3	44.4	55.6	22.2	22.2	33.3	33.3	33.3	75.0	12.5	12.5	11.1	22.2	66.7
Pharmaceuticals and medicines	3254	58.9	14.0	27.1	14.3	20.0	65.7	38.1	34.3	27.6	22.9	28.6	48.6	60.0	21.9	18.1	3.8	9.4	86.8
Soap, cleaning compound, and toilet preparations	3256	22.2	16.7	61.1	11.8	29.4	58.8	44.4	27.8	27.8	17.6	23.5	58.8	38.9	33.3	27.8	5.9	5.9	88.2
Paint, coating, adhesive, and other chemicals	3255, 3259	20.0	20.0	60.0	10.0	20.0	70.0	34.1	43.9	22.0	17.1	34.1	48.8	68.3	17.1	14.6	2.5	7.5	90.0
Plastics and rubber products	326	28.1	17.2	54.7	18.5	32.3	49.2	24.6	40.0	35.4	12.5	35.9	51.6	44.6	26.2	29.2	4.6	13.8	81.5
Nonmetallic mineral products	327	18.2	13.6	68.2	13.6	13.6	72.7	30.4	30.4	39.1	13.6	31.8	54.5	34.8	21.7	43.5	4.5	13.6	81.8
Primary metals	331	22.2	27.8	50.0	12.5	31.3	56.3	23.5	35.3	41.2	11.8	35.3	52.9	41.2	29.4	29.4	6.3	18.8	75.0
Fabricated metal products	332	20.0	20.0	60.0	15.7	23.1	61.2	23.0	27.4	49.6	14.1	26.7	59.3	31.3	20.1	48.5	3.0	6.7	90.4
Machinery	333	31.3	22.3	46.4	21.8	32.4	45.8	29.6	37.4	33.0	20.5	30.7	48.9	43.0	28.5	28.5	4.5	11.9	83.5
Agricultural implement	33311	44.4	16.7	38.9	29.4	29.4	41.2	38.9	27.8	33.3	27.8	27.8	44.4	44.4	22.2	33.3	5.6	11.1	83.3
Semiconductor machinery	333242	60.0	20.0	20.0	40.0	20.0	40.0	33.3	33.3	33.3	33.3	33.3	33.3	60.0	20.0	20.0	40.0	20.0	40.0
Engine, turbine, and power transmission equipment	3336	53.8	7.7	38.5	14.3	14.3	71.4	35.7	42.9	21.4	23.1	46.2	30.8	61.5	15.4	23.1	7.1	7.1	85.7
Other machinery	other 333	27.2	24.5	48.3	21.9	34.9	43.2	27.9	38.1	34.0	18.2	30.1	51.7	40.8	30.6	28.6	4.2	13.2	82.6
Computer and electronic products	334	43.5	17.9	38.7	30.4	25.6	44.0	45.5	31.7	22.8	35.1	31.0	33.9	60.5	21.0	18.6	13.7	19.3	67.1
Communications equipment	3342	37.0	14.8	48.1	25.9	29.6	44.4	40.7	40.7	18.5	35.7	35.7	28.6	51.9	29.6	18.5	12.0	16.0	72.0
Semiconductor and other electronic components	3344	48.9	17.0	34.0	36.2	19.1	44.7	43.5	23.9	32.6	40.4	23.4	36.2	61.7	14.9	23.4	23.9	21.7	54.3
Navigational, measuring, electromedical, and control instruments	3345	42.5	20.0	37.5	30.4	26.6	43.0	47.5	35.0	17.5	33.8	32.5	33.8	62.5	20.0	17.5	10.5	15.8	73.7
Electromedical, electrotherapeutic, and irradiation apparatus	334510, 334517	55.6	22.2	22.2	27.8	38.9	33.3	38.9	44.4	16.7	21.1	47.4	31.6	58.8	23.5	17.6	5.6	16.7	77.8
Search, detection, navigation, guidance, aeronautical, and nautical system and instruments	334511	50.0	14.3	35.7	42.9	14.3	42.9	42.9	28.6	28.6	42.9	21.4	35.7	66.7	13.3	20.0	7.1	35.7	i 57.1
Other measuring and controlling devices	other 3345	37.3	21.6	41.2	30.0	24.0	46.0	52.0	34.0	14.0	37.3	29.4	33.3	60.8	21.6	17.6	12.8	12.8	74.5
Other computer and electronic products	other 334	44.4	16.7	38.9	22.2	33.3	44.4	42.1	26.3	31.6	23.5	35.3	41.2	61.1	27.8	11.1	10.5	31.6	57.9
Electrical equipment, appliances, and components	335	47.4	15.8	36.8	35.9	23.1	41.0	36.8	28.9	34.2	26.3	34.2	39.5	60.5	21.1	18.4	18.4	18.4	63.2
Transportation equipment	336	25.7	20.8	53.5	28.0	22.0	50.0	33.7	27.7	38.6	22.0	27.0	51.0	49.0	21.0	30.0	4.0	15.0	81.0
Motor vehicles, bodies, trailers, and parts	3361, 3362, 3363	23.7	16.9	59.3	31.0	19.0	50.0	34.5	25.9	39.7	26.3	22.8	50.9	44.8	20.7	34.5	3.4	17.2	79.3

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Industry and company size	NAICS code	Utility patents			Design patents			Trademarks			Copyrights			Trade secrets			Mask works			
		Very important	Somewhat important	Not important	Very important	Somewhat important	Not important	Very important	Somewhat important	Not important	Very important	Somewhat important	Not important	Very important	Somewhat important	Not important	Very important	Somewhat important	Not important	
Aerospace products and parts	3364	22.2	33.3	44.4	14.8	29.6	55.6	18.5	37.0	44.4	11.1	37.0	51.9	59.3	25.9	14.8	3.7	14.8	81.5	
Aircraft, aircraft engine, and aircraft parts	336411–13	20.8	33.3	45.8	16.0	32.0	52.0	16.7	37.5	45.8	12.0	36.0	52.0	56.0	28.0	16.0	4.2	16.7	79.2	
Guided missile, space vehicle, and related parts	336414–15, 336419	40.0	20.0	40.0	25.0	25.0	50.0	33.3	33.3	33.3	25.0	25.0	50.0	50.0	25.0	25.0	20.0	20.0	60.0	
Military armored vehicle, tank, and tank components	336992	33.3	33.3	33.3	33.3	33.3	33.3	33.3	33.3	33.3	33.3	33.3	33.3	33.3	33.3	33.3	0.0	33.3	66.7	
Other transportation	other 336	37.5	18.8	43.8	37.5	25.0	37.5	56.3	18.8	25.0	25.0	25.0	50.0	41.2	17.6	41.2	12.5	6.3	81.3	
Furniture and related products	337	17.6	17.6	64.7	22.2	27.8	50.0	29.4	23.5	47.1	18.8	18.8	62.5	23.5	29.4	47.1	5.9	11.8	82.4	
Miscellaneous	339	50.9	15.2	33.9	36.3	28.3	35.4	47.3	30.4	22.3	32.1	27.7	40.2	53.6	24.1	22.3	3.6	7.1	89.3	
Medical equipment and supplies	3391	60.5	11.8	27.6	40.8	28.9	30.3	48.7	36.8	14.5	34.7	28.0	37.3	57.9	25.0	17.1	3.9	6.6	89.5	
Other miscellaneous manufacturing	3399	31.6	21.1	47.4	27.0	27.0	45.9	43.6	17.9	38.5	26.3	28.9	44.7	42.1	23.7	34.2	5.3	10.5	84.2	
Nonmanufacturing industries	21–23, 42–81	19.4	23.1	57.6	11.2	21.6	67.2	30.9	33.7	35.4	24.3	29.6	46.1	41.9	24.8	33.3	3.2	9.3	87.5	
Mining, quarrying, oil and gas extraction, and support activities	21	37.5	25.0	37.5	12.5	37.5	50.0	28.6	42.9	28.6	25.0	37.5	37.5	37.5	37.5	25.0	12.5	25.0	62.5	
Utilities	22	28.6	14.3	57.1	12.5	25.0	62.5	37.5	12.5	50.0	25.0	25.0	50.0	37.5	37.5	25.0	12.5	12.5	75.0	
Wholesale trade	42	17.9	30.2	51.9	19.4	28.1	52.5	41.6	24.8	33.5	29.8	22.4	47.8	41.6	31.1	27.3	3.8	10.6	85.6	
Electronic shopping and electronic auctions	454111–12	16.7	41.7	41.7	16.7	58.3	25.0	46.2	38.5	15.4	16.7	41.7	41.7	16.7	41.7	41.7	8.3	8.3	83.3	
Transportation and warehousing	48–49	25.0	25.0	50.0	14.3	14.3	71.4	25.0	25.0	50.0	25.0	25.0	50.0	25.0	25.0	50.0	12.5	12.5	75.0	
Information	51	18.5	22.8	58.7	8.5	23.9	67.6	37.3	36.4	26.4	30.5	30.8	38.7	43.4	24.4	32.2	2.7	8.5	88.8	
Publishing	511	17.3	22.0	60.7	8.0	22.7	69.3	41.1	36.4	22.5	36.8	28.9	34.2	44.4	27.5	28.1	2.0	7.9	90.1	
Newspaper, periodical, book, and directory publishers	5111	0.0	0.0	100.0	i 0.0	50.0	i 50.0	i 40.0	i 40.0	i 20.0	40.0	i 40.0	i 20.0	i 25.0	i 25.0	i 50.0	i 0.0	0.0	100.0	i
Software publishers	5112	17.7	22.4	59.9	8.1	22.3	69.6	41.2	36.5	22.3	36.5	29.1	34.5	44.7	28.0	27.3	2.0	8.1	89.9	
Telecommunications	517	26.7	13.3	60.0	6.7	26.7	66.7	33.3	26.7	40.0	13.3	33.3	53.3	33.3	20.0	46.7	6.3	12.5	81.3	
Data processing, hosting, and related services	518	19.2	23.8	57.0	9.2	24.3	66.4	33.3	37.3	29.4	26.3	31.6	42.1	44.4	20.3	35.3	3.9	7.9	88.2	
Other information	other 51	17.6	29.4	52.9	11.8	35.3	52.9	41.2	41.2	17.6	31.3	37.5	31.3	31.3	37.5	31.3	6.3	18.8	75.0	
Finance and insurance	52	20.0	10.0	70.0	9.5	19.0	71.4	33.3	38.1	28.6	25.0	35.0	40.0	35.0	35.0	30.0	4.8	14.3	81.0	
Real estate and rental and leasing	53	28.6	14.3	57.1	16.7	16.7	66.7	28.6	28.6	42.9	20.0	20.0	60.0	28.6	28.6	42.9	14.3	14.3	71.4	
Lessors of nonfinancial intangible assets (except copyrighted works)	533	50.0	0.0	50.0	i 33.3	33.3	i 33.3	i 50.0	50.0	i 0.0	33.3	33.3	i 33.3	i 50.0	i 50.0	0.0	0.0	50.0	50.0	i
Other real estate and rental and leasing	other 53	16.7	16.7	66.7	20.0	20.0	60.0	33.3	16.7	50.0	20.0	20.0	60.0	16.7	33.3	50.0	16.7	16.7	66.7	
Professional, scientific, and technical services	54	20.4	22.6	57.0	10.9	18.5	70.6	24.8	35.5	39.7	21.0	30.9	48.1	42.9	23.2	33.9	3.5	9.6	86.8	
Architectural, engineering, and related services	5413	13.9	31.0	55.1	6.3	15.2	78.5	14.6	40.5	44.9	13.9	19.0	67.1	25.9	22.2	51.9	3.8	5.8	90.4	
Computer systems design and related services	5415	16.1	22.2	61.7	13.1	20.8	66.0	33.1	36.2	30.8	28.4	35.2	36.4	46.0	26.1	28.0	2.7	12.5	84.7	
Scientific research and development services	5417	43.1	23.6	33.3	15.7	24.0	60.3	27.3	35.5	37.2	18.2	33.9	47.9	55.4	23.1	21.5	6.7	11.8	81.5	
Research and development in nanotechnology	541713	50.0	25.0	25.0	25.0	37.5	37.5	28.6	42.9	28.6	25.0	37.5	37.5	50.0	25.0	25.0	14.3	14.3	71.4	
Research and development in biotechnology (except nanobiotechnology)	541714	46.7	26.7	26.7	16.7	23.3	60.0	33.3	30.0	36.7	20.0	30.0	50.0	58.6	20.7	20.7	7.1	14.3	78.6	
Research and development in the physical, engineering, and life sciences (except nanotechnology and biotechnology)	541715	41.9	22.1	36.0	15.3	23.5	61.2	25.6	37.2	37.2	17.6	35.3	47.1	53.5	24.4	22.1	6.0	11.9	82.1	
Research and development in the social sciences and humanities	541720	25.0	25.0	50.0	0.0	33.3	66.7	33.3	33.3	33.3	33.3	33.3	33.3	33.3	33.3	33.3	0.0	33.3	66.7	
Other professional, scientific, and technical services	other 54	14.4	9.3	76.3	7.1	11.2	81.6	16.3	25.5	58.2	18.6	34.0	47.4	46.4	17.5	36.1	3.1	6.2	90.7	
Health care services	621–23	19.0	14.3	66.7	9.1	18.2	72.7	23.8	23.8	52.4	14.3	23.8	61.9	31.8	22.7	45.5	4.8	9.5	85.7	

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Other nonmanufacturing	23, 44–45 (excluding 454111–12), 55–56, 624, 71–72, 81	17.0		14.9		68.1		12.8		19.1		68.1		31.9		23.4		44.7		15.2		28.3		56.5		34.0		21.3		44.7		4.3		6.5		89.1	
All companies (number of domestic employees)	–	26.0		20.3		53.7		16.4		23.1		60.6		33.6		32.6		33.9		23.6		29.2		47.2		45.5		23.8		30.7		4.2		10.2		85.7	
Small companies ^a																																					
10–19	–	22.2		20.2		57.6		12.8		21.6		65.6		31.3		31.1		37.7		23.7		29.2		47.0		49.3		18.7		31.9		4.3		9.0		86.7	
20–49	–	24.3		17.6		58.1		14.5		21.4		64.2		27.4		34.5		38.1		22.9		29.7		47.5		44.6		26.8		28.6		3.4		11.4		85.3	
Medium companies																																					
50–99	–	23.5		21.5		54.9		17.3		26.4		56.3		33.7		30.4		35.9		21.1		28.0		50.9		44.7		24.1		31.2		3.6		10.2		86.2	
100–249	–	25.2		17.0		57.9		17.2		22.6		60.2		33.7		32.4		33.9		22.4		27.6		50.0		42.5		24.5		33.0		5.0		8.5		86.5	
Large companies																																					
250–499	–	30.5		20.9		48.6		19.2		24.9		55.9		37.6		33.1		29.2		23.9		31.3		44.9		44.4		24.7		30.9		5.1		11.3		83.6	
500–999	–	27.2		37.1		35.8		18.7		18.0		63.3		35.3		44.0		20.7		24.0		24.0		52.0		37.7		20.5		41.7		4.7		10.0		85.3	
1,000–4,999	–	41.0		21.4		37.6		22.4		28.4		49.1		53.8		25.6		20.5		31.6		35.0		33.3		52.1		25.6		22.2		6.8		12.0		81.2	
5,000–9,999	–	52.2		21.7		26.1		29.2		37.5		33.3		62.5		25.0		12.5		37.5		37.5		25.0		58.3		25.0		16.7		8.7		17.4		73.9	
10,000–24,999	–	57.9		21.1		21.1		38.9		33.3		27.8		72.2		16.7		11.1		42.1		42.1		15.8		63.2		21.1		15.8		11.1		16.7		72.2	
25,000 or more	–	58.3		16.7		25.0		33.3		41.7		25.0		75.0		16.7		8.3		46.2		38.5		15.4		61.5		23.1		15.4		8.3		16.7		75.0	

i = more than 50% of the estimate is a combination of imputation and reweighting to account for nonresponse.

NAICS = 2017 North American Industry Classification System.

^a The Business Enterprise Research and Development Survey does not include companies with fewer than 10 domestic employees.

Note(s):
Detail may not add to total because of rounding. Industry classification is based on the dominant business code for domestic R&D performance, where available. For companies that did not report business codes, the classification used for sampling was assigned. Statistics are representative of companies located in the United States that performed or funded \$50,000 or more of R&D. Statistics are based on companies in the United States that reported to the survey. No systematic item imputation was applied.

Source(s):
National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics and Census Bureau, Business Enterprise Research and Development Survey, 2024.