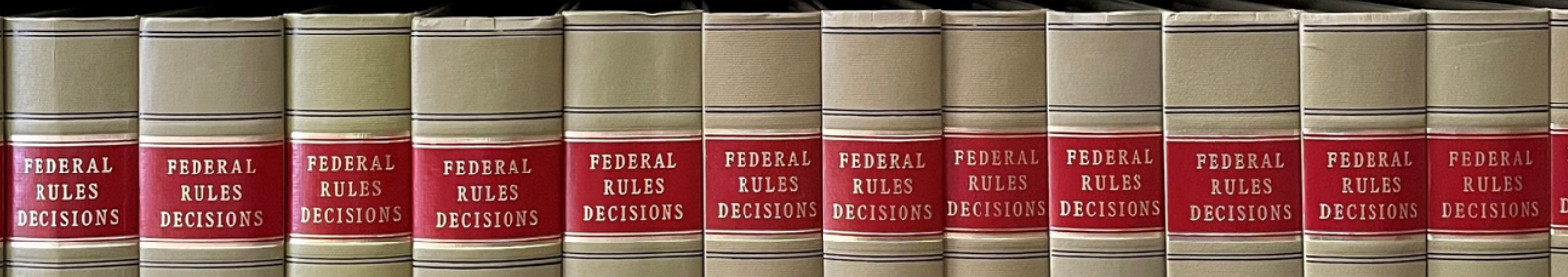
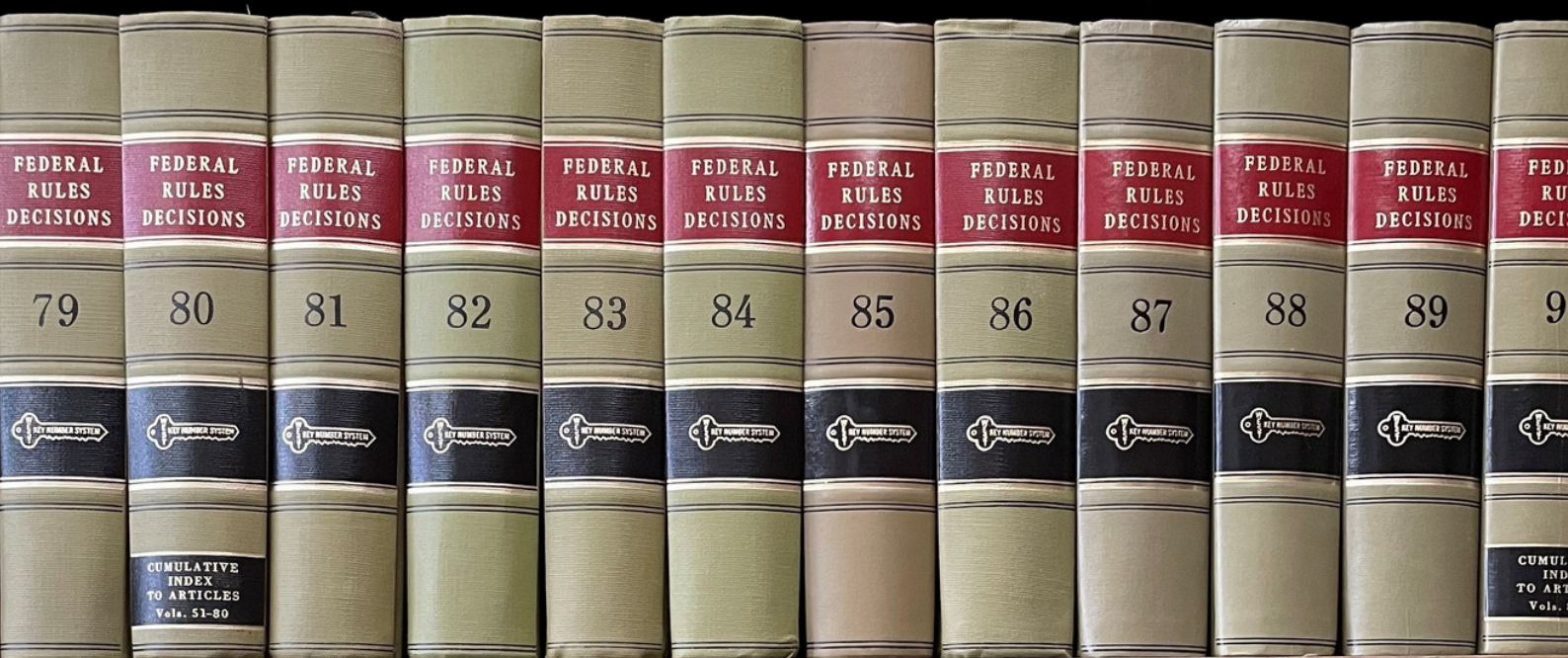
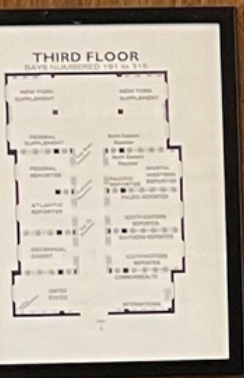


UNITED STATES COLLECTION GUIDE





INTRODUCTION

Middle Temple Library holds one of the largest collections of American law outside the United States. The U.S. collection is jointly funded by the four Inns of Court as one of the Middle Temple Library's subject specialisms.

The U.S. collection provides practitioners with access to U.S. case law, legislation, practitioner textbooks and other key resources for those wishing to draw on persuasive U.S. authorities or undertake comparative or international legal work.

ACCESSING THE U.S. COLLECTION



The U.S. collection is housed on the Third Floor of the Library along with the EU Collection. U.S. textbooks and reference materials are located on the eastern side of the Library, and the *National Reporter* law reports are shelved in the Rutledge Suite of advocacy training rooms on the same floor.

Some previous editions of U.S. textbooks and early law reports are housed off-site and can generally be retrieved upon request within one working day. All material shelved in the Rutledge Suite is also available through Westlaw US and can be retrieved by Library staff as required.

HISTORY

Library material relating to America can be traced as far back as the 1600s, a period in which many Middle Templars were involved with the colonisation of America and foundation of the Virginia Company. Throughout the 1700s, hundreds of American men joined the Inn to study the law in England, with many returning to America to become successful lawyers and prominent figures in the American Revolution. Five Middle Templars were signatories to the 1776 Declaration of Independence, and in 1787, seven Middle Templars were amongst the 39 original signatories to the U.S. Constitution. A framed facsimile of the Declaration of Independence hangs on the Third Floor of the Ashley Building, alongside portraits of two notable American Middle Templars: John Laurens, aide-de-camp of George Washington during the American Revolutionary War, and William Rawle, United States district attorney for Pennsylvania and president of the Maryland Society for the Abolition of Slavery.

While Middle Temple admissions from America fell in the period following American Independence, ties were renewed in the 20th century. In 1905, the Inn called the United States Ambassador Joseph Choate as an Honorary Benchler, a tradition which has since continued, alongside regular reciprocal visits with the American Inns of Court and the American Bar Association. As the Inn embraced its ties with America, the Library's collection of U.S. material also expanded to provide greater access to persuasive legal authorities from U.S. courts. In the late 1920s, Librarian H.A.C. Sturgess acquired a near complete set of federal and state law reports thanks to the enormous generosity of American members and friends of the Inn, including significant contributions from the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and the American Ambassador Hon. W. Aldrich. While the Library no longer collects U.S. case reporters in hardcopy, a collection of practitioner textbooks continues to expand and is complemented by electronic access to U.S. cases, legislation, and authoritative secondary resources through various online database subscriptions.

THE U.S. COLLECTION

CASE LAW

U.S. federal and state case law can be searched electronically through Lexis US and Westlaw US. The Library also holds two major U.S. law report series in print:

- ***United States Reports* (off-site 1754-1972):** The official and most authoritative report series of U.S. Supreme Court opinions, also published freely via the U.S. Supreme Court website.
- ***National Reporter System* (Third Floor and off-site coverage varies by series):** A collection of federal and state law reports, and main case reporter for opinions originating from the lower federal courts and some state appellate courts. Published by West and available online in full through Westlaw US.

Earlier American case law pre-dating the *National Reporter* series is available through HeinOnline and LLMC Digital, and some early reports are housed off-site and can be retrieved upon request.

LEGISLATION

Current federal and state legislation can be searched electronically through Lexis US and Westlaw US. The two main sources of federal legislation are the *United States Statutes at Large* and the *United States Code*, which are both official government publications and available freely online.

The Library holds additional legislative resources, including:

- ***United States Code Annotated*** (Westlaw US)
- ***United States Code Service*** (Lexis US)
- ***Uniform Laws Annotated*** (off-site up to 2016; Westlaw US)
- ***Uniform Commercial Code*** (print; HeinOnline)

TEXTBOOKS, REFERENCE AND JOURNALS

The Library holds a broad range of practitioner textbooks, including authoritative titles on civil procedure, family law, and insurance law, major multi-volume works such as Speiser's *American Law of Torts* and *Williston on Contract*, and texts on other subjects of particular significance to British lawyers.

Reference works held include:

- ***Words and Phrases*** (print up to 2020; Westlaw US): A multi-volume legal dictionary containing judicial definitions from both state and federal courts
- ***Corpus Juris Secundum*** (print up to 2020; Westlaw US): A multi-volume legal encyclopædia of federal and state law, arranged alphabetically by topic (comparable to Halsbury's Laws).
- ***Restatements of the Law*** (Bay 127; HeinOnline): Distillations of the common law in subject areas such as contract and property, a persuasive authority often cited in court.

Thousands of U.S. journals titles are available online through HeinOnline including several major titles which are also held in print off-site:

- ***Harvard Law Review*** (1887-2022; volumes 108-135 on-site in Bay 199)
- ***Yale Law Journal*** (1891-2001)
- ***Notre Dame Law Review*** (1982-2020)

DATABASES

U.S. law can be accessed online in the Library through four major databases:

Westlaw US:

- Federal, state, and district cases including *West's National Reporter System*
- Current federal and state legislation, codes, regulations and legislative history
- Vast library of secondary sources including *Black's Law Dictionary*, *Corpus Juris Secundum*, *Uniform Laws Annotated*, the *United States Code Annotated* and *Words and Phrases*
- A range of features including Form Finder, news and arbitration materials

Lexis US:

- Federal, state, and district cases including *U.S. Supreme Court Cases, Lawyers' Edition*
- Federal and state legislation, codes, regulations, agency materials and *United States Code Service*
- Labor & Employment Practical Guidance including practice notes, checklists, forms, drafting tools and automated templates
- A range of features including arbitration materials, Shepard's Citation Services, Litigation Analytics, Document Analysis and Legal News Hub

HeinOnline

- *Law Journal Library*: thousands of U.S. journal titles including the *ABA Journal*, *Harvard Law Review* and *Yale Law Journal*
- U.S. Congressional Documents including *Congressional Record* (the U.S. equivalent of *Hansard*), *CRS Reports* and congressional hearings
- *U.S. Supreme Court Library*: includes *U.S. Reports*, Slip Opinions and Preliminary Prints
- *American Law Institute Library*: containing current and historical *Restatements of the Law*

- *U.S. Federal Legislative History Library*
- *U.S. Code* (1925-)
- *U.S. Statutes at Large* (1789-)
- *Early American Case Law*: cases from the late 1700s-1920s
- *West Academic Casebooks Archive*: previous editions of casebooks including Hornbook and Nutshell series

LLMC Digital:

- *U.S. Statutes at Large* (1776-)
- Early federal court decisions
- Early federal and state codes, statutes and laws
- Congressional journals, hearings, and committee reports
- Indigenous American laws and treaties
- Anglo-American legal treatises

CAPITAL PUNISHMENT COLLECTION

Although not formally part of the U.S. collection, the capital punishment collection is also located on the Third Floor and was created in 2005 by request of Middle Templars who had advised inmates of death rows in the U.S..

Much of the collection has been donated to the Inn, including donations from the private libraries of Master Blom-Cooper, Professor Anthony Amsterdam and Professor Roger Hood. Books and documentaries have also been donated by Amicus, Amnesty International, Reprieve and the Illinois-based Centre on Wrongful Convictions.

THE U.S. LEGAL SYSTEM

The Federal Legal System

The United States legal system operates at both federal and state levels. Powers of the federal government are defined by the U.S. constitution with remaining powers left to the jurisdiction of the states. Federal law applies at a national level and each of the 50 states also has its own executive, legislative, and judicial branches.

Federal vs. State Courts

Both the federal government and each of the state governments have their own court systems. Federal courts are courts of limited jurisdiction and can only hear cases authorised by the United States Constitution or federal statutes, while state courts are courts of general jurisdiction and hear most civil and criminal matters arising under state law. Jurisdiction will therefore depend on the subject matter of the case. In some instances, federal and state courts have concurrent jurisdiction, meaning that certain cases can be brought in either court where the relevant jurisdictional requirements are met.

The Federal Court System	The State Court System
• Cases that deal with the constitutionality of a law • Cases involving the laws and treaties of the U.S • Cases involving ambassadors and public ministers • Disputes between two or more states • Admiralty law • Bankruptcy • Habeas corpus issues	• Most criminal cases, probate (involving wills and estates) • Most contract cases, tort cases (personal injuries), family law (marriages, divorces, adoptions), etc

Federal Courts

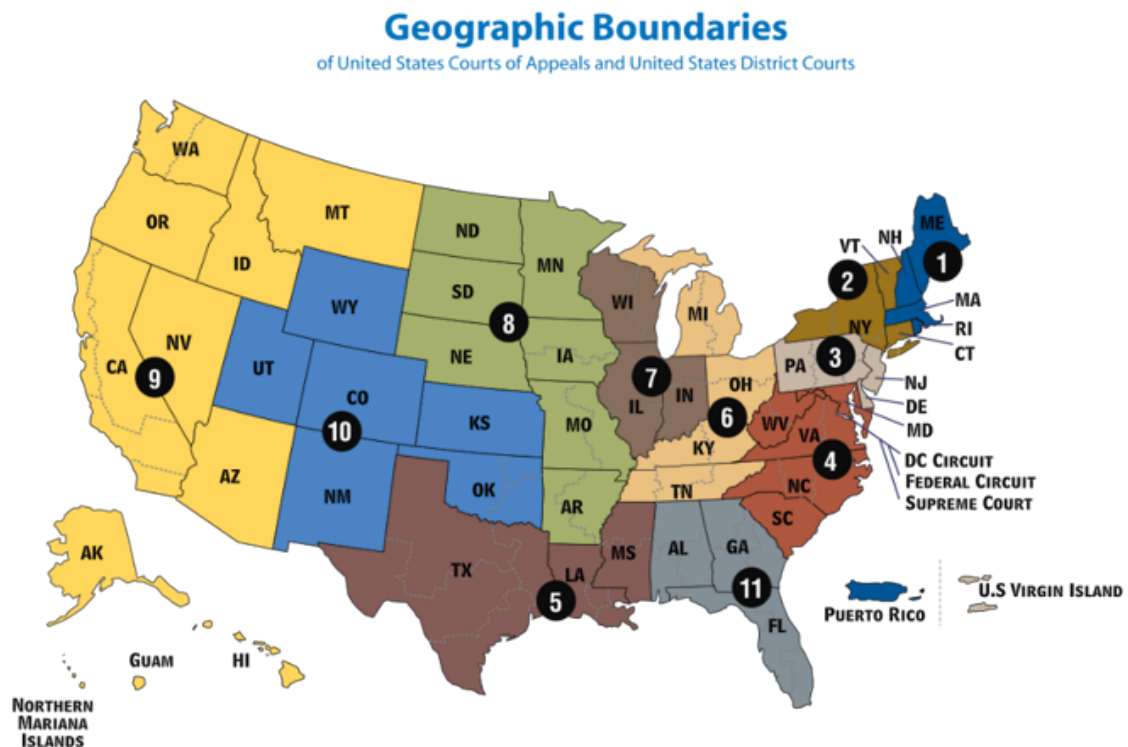
The federal court structure is organised into three principal tiers: U.S. District Courts, U.S. Courts of Appeals, and the U.S. Supreme Court. There are some additional federal trial courts which handle specialised matters such as the Court of International Trade and Court of Federal Claims, as well as some courts and tribunals which sit outside of the federal judicial branch, known as 'Article I' courts.

U.S. District Courts

The federal courts of first instance are the U.S. District Courts which conduct trials and hearings. There are 94 federal district courts, with at least one in each state. Each district includes a U.S. Bankruptcy Court as a unit of the district court. District court rulings are only of persuasive authority, even for later cases heard before the same court.

U.S. Courts of Appeals

There is a right of appeal from the federal district courts to the U.S. Courts of Appeals, which are arranged into 13 circuits, consisting of 11 numbered regional circuits (1st Circuit, 2nd Circuit, etc.), the District of Columbia Circuit (D.C. Cir.), and the Federal Circuit (Fed. Cir.). The D.C. Circuit is also a regional court with jurisdiction only over the District of Columbia and is notable for hearing cases related to federal government agencies and administrative law. The Federal Circuit has nationwide jurisdiction and hears appeals in specialised cases, including appeals from the U.S. Court of International Trade and the U.S. Court of Federal Claims. A decision of a circuit court is binding on all district Courts within its circuit and is a persuasive authority for district courts and circuit courts in other circuits.



Source: <https://www.uscourts.gov/>

U.S. Supreme Court

The highest court in the federal system is the U.S. Supreme Court. Federal Courts of Appeal and superior state courts (on matters of federal law) can request for a decision to be reviewed by the Supreme Court by filing a petition for a writ of certiorari. The Supreme Court then has discretion to choose whether to grant the petition. The Supreme Court typically hears a small proportion of these petitions, but where it chooses to hear an appeal, the Supreme Court opinion will be binding on all federal courts.

State Courts

Each state has its own judicial system and unique court structure. In general, state judicial systems will comprise of a trial court, appellate court and superior court, as well as specialised courts such as Family, Juvenile, Traffic, Small Claims and Municipal. State courts are the final arbiters of state laws and constitutions, and their interpretation of federal law or the U.S. Constitution may be appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court.

FEDERAL CASE LAW

Federal case law can be accessed electronically in the Library through Lexis US, HeinOnline and Westlaw US, and historic case law is available through LLMC Digital.

Slip Opinions

Opinions from the federal courts are often available electronically as “slip opinions” through the relevant court website. Links to individual federal court websites are available from the U.S. Courts website and slip opinions are also compiled together on the GovInfo *United States Courts Opinions* database.

Slip opinions will include a unique docket number in the headnote e.g. 24-1287 which can be searched across Lexis US and Westlaw US to find reports or case summaries.

Citation example:

Kitchens v. Grohman, No. 90-347, slip op. at 6 (D. Mass. Dec. 4, 1990)

Unpublished vs Published Opinions

While all opinions from the Supreme Court are published in the *United States Reports*, opinions from the lower federal courts are not always published in case reporters. The court will indicate if an opinion will be published in a case reporter based on whether it meets the criteria outlined in the relevant court rules. Opinions designated for publication are published in West’s Federal Reporter series.

“Unpublished” opinions generally lack precedential value but are sometimes reported in a case reporter, and in some instances may be cited as a persuasive authority depending on the relevant court rules. Summaries of unpublished cases may also be available through Lexis US or Westlaw US. Each database will usually issue a unique identifier as a substitute for a reporter citation, which may be cited when a case is unreported, along with the docket number, court details and judgment date:

Citation examples:

Albrecht v. Stranczek, No. 87 C 9535, 1991 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 5088, at *1,*3 (N.D. Ill. Apr. 15, 1991)

Kvaas Constr. Co. v. United States, No. 90-266C, 1991 WL 47632, at *2-3 (Cl. Ct. Apr. 8, 1991)

United States Reports

The *United States Reports* is the final and official Government Printer's series of Supreme Court opinions. These are the most authoritative version of the Court's decisions and should be cited if available. The Library holds the *United States Reports* off-site in print up to 1972, and they are also available electronically through HeinOnline and LLMC Digital as well as freely through the Supreme Court website and several other free resources

Citation example:

Roe v. Wade, 410 U.S. 113 (1973)

Early Supreme Court Cases

Volumes 1-90 of the *United States Reports* were originally printed as nominative reports and may be cited after the clerk or reporter who compiled them. Nominative reports should be cited as the official reprint citation followed by the name of the original reporter and volume number.

Citation example:

Marbury v. Madison, 5 U.S. (1 Cranch) 137 (1803)

Preliminary Prints of United States Reports

Prior to publication in the *United States Reports*, Supreme Court slip opinions are replaced by Preliminary Prints of the *United States Reports*, which are issued in parts before compilation in a future bound volume. Preliminary Prints will reflect the usual publication style of the *United States Reports*, inclusive of a final citation that will carry forward unchanged in the bound volumes of the *United States Reports*.

Unofficial Supreme Court Reports

Supreme Court opinions are assigned a *United States Reports* citation long before publication, which can take approximately five years. In the meantime, there are two “unofficial” series of Supreme Court reports which are published privately in advance of the *United States Reports*. Where an opinion has not yet been published in the *United States Reports*, the unofficial reports may be cited in the preferred order:

- ***Supreme Court Reporter*** (print up to 2006; HeinOnline; Westlaw US)
- ***United States Supreme Court Reports, Lawyers’ Edition*** (Lexis US)

Citation examples:

Roe v. Wade, 93 S.Ct. 705 (1973)

Roe v. Wade, 35 L.Ed.2d 147 (1973)

Federal Reporter Series

Opinions from the federal courts are published in the Federal Reporter series which is part of West’s National Reporter System. While the *United States Reports* remains the most authoritative law report series for Supreme Court cases, the Federal Reporter series is generally the preferred source for opinions originating from the appellate and lower federal courts.

The Federal Reporter series is available online through Westlaw US, alongside print holdings of older volumes, with coverage varying between series. The table on the next page outlines how to access each series, the available coverage, and the standard abbreviations used in Federal Reporter citations.

Federal Reporter Series: Quick Reference Guide

Title	Abbreviation	Coverage	Access
Supreme Court Reporter	S. Ct.	U.S. Supreme Court	Bays 295–297 (1882–2006) Westlaw US
Federal Cases	F. Cas.	Republished U.S. district and circuit courts from 1789–1880	Off site Westlaw US
Federal Reporter	F. F.2d (1924–1993) F.3d (1993–2021) F.4 th (2021–)	U.S. Courts of Appeals (1891–) District courts (pre-1932)	Off site (1880–1924) Bays 223–232 (1924–1996) Westlaw US
Federal Supplement	F. Supp. F. Supp. 2d (1997–2014) F. Supp. 3d (2014–)	District courts U.S. Court of International Trade Judicial Panel on Multidistrict Litigation	Bays 233–241 (1932–1996) Westlaw US
Federal Rules Decisions	F.R.D.	District court decisions concerning Federal Rules	Bays 232–233 (1938–1995) Westlaw US
Bankruptcy Reporter	B.R.	Federal bankruptcy cases	Westlaw US only
Federal Appendix	F. App'x	Unpublished decisions of U.S. courts of appeals	Westlaw US only

FEDERAL LEGISLATION

Federal legislation is introduced as a bill or resolution. Once a bill has been passed by both houses of Congress it is signed into law and published as a slip law. At the end of each congressional session, laws are arranged chronologically and published in the *United States Statutes at Large*, known as session laws. These laws then become codified in the *United States Code* which is published every six years.

Federal legislation can be accessed electronically through various free resources and in the Library through Lexis US and Westlaw US, with historic legislation available through LLMC Digital and HeinOnline.

Bills and Resolutions

Bills and resolutions are published through Congress.gov and assigned a number within each congress and will be preceded by letters indicating the type of resolution if applicable. Federal bill citations generally contain the name of the bill, abbreviated Congress chamber (H.R. or S.), type of proposal, congress number, section number (if any), and year of publication.

Citation example:

Freedom of Information Act, S. 1160, 88th Cong. § 1 (1965)

Slip Laws (Public and Private Laws)

Recent slip laws that have not yet been published as session laws are available via Congress.gov along with the *Statutes at Large*. Each slip law is assigned a number indicating which legislative session the law was enacted and whether it is public or private. For example, PL 116-12 would be the twelfth public law enacted during the 116th congress and PRIV 112-1 is the first private law enacted during the 112th congress.

Statutes at Large

The *United States Statutes at Large* is the permanent collection of all laws and resolutions enacted during each session of Congress and is available freely through GovInfo. The Library holds the *Statutes at Large* off-site in print up to 2004 and electronically through HeinOnline (1789-) and LLMC Digital (1776-).

Each session law is assigned a unique citation which references the relevant volume and page of the *Statutes of Large*. For example, 115 Stat. 272 would be located on page 272 of volume 115. Session laws are typically cited by both the Public Law number and Statutes at Large citation if not available in the current *United States Code*.

Citation example:

EFFORT Act of 2021, Pub. L. No. 116-335, 134 Stat. 5117

United States Code

The United States Code (U.S.C.) is the main codified compilation of general and permanent federal laws. It organises current legislation by subject inclusive of amendments or repeals. It is published every six years with annual supplements, available in the Library through HeinOnline and freely via GovInfo (1994-present) and the Library of Congress (1925-1988, with supplements up to 1994).

The U.S.C. is arranged by subject into 54 numbered titles. Each title contains numbered sections indicated by a section symbol (§), which may be organised by subdivisions. The U.S.C. is typically cited by section title, title number and section.

Citation example:

Disposition of money accruing from lapsed salaries or unused appropriations for salaries, 5 U.S.C. § 5502 (2024)

Annotated versions of the U.S.C. are also available electronically in the Library, containing citations to secondary sources and case law:

- ***United States Code Annotated (U.S.C.A.)***: available through Westlaw US
- ***United States Code Service (U.S.C.S.)***: available through Lexis US

Tracing Federal Legislation

Public Law numbers and *Statutes at Large* citations are listed in the “source credit” of each *United States Code* section, allowing you to locate legislation which created or amended a provision in the U.S.C.

Congress.gov will list bill numbers and public law numbers in the *Statutes at Large*, allowing you to locate bill information elsewhere on the website such as congressional debates, committee hearings and reports.



STATE CASE LAW

Slip Opinions

State court decisions are often printed in official state reporters and opinions may be published freely online through the relevant court websites. State court opinions may also be searched across the Library through Lexis US and Westlaw US as well as several free resources including Google Scholar, CourtListener and the Caselaw Access Project.

State Reporters

Some state cases are reported in West’s State Reporter series, available online through Westlaw US, along with print holdings of older volumes which vary in coverage by series.

The table on the next page indicates how to access each series, coverage, and standard abbreviations used in State Reporter citations:

State Reporter Series: Quick Reference Guide

Title	Abbreviation	State Coverage	Access
Atlantic Reporter	A. (1885–1938) A.2d (1938–2010) A.3d (2010–)	CT, DE, DC, ME, MD, NH, NJ, PA, RI, VT	Off-site (1902–1938) Bays 202–208 (1938–2010) Westlaw US
North Eastern Reporter	N.E. (1885–1936) N.E.2d (1936–2012) N.E.3d (2012–)	IL, IN, MA, NY, OH	Bays 231–241 (1885–2010) LLMC (1885–1923) Westlaw US
North Western Reporter	N.W. (1879–1941) N.W.2d (1941–)	IA, MI, MN, NE, ND, SD, WI	Bays 241–249 (1878–2010) LLMC (1879–1925) Westlaw US
South Eastern Reporter	S.E. (1887–1938) S.E.2d (1938–)	GA, NC, SC, VA, WV	Bays 264–269 (1887–2010) LLMC (1887–1923) Westlaw US
Southern Reporter	So. (1887–1940) So. 2d (1940–2009) So. 3d (2009–)	AL, FL, LA, MS	Bays 269–282 (1997–2010) Westlaw US
South Western Reporter	S.W. (1886–1928) S.W.2d (1928–1999) S.W.3d (1999–)	AR, KY, MO, TN, TX	Bays 293–304 (1886–2010) Westlaw US
Pacific Reporter	P. (1883–1931) P.2d (1931–2000) P.3d (2000–)	AK, AZ, CA, CO, HI, ID, KS, MT, NV, NM, OK, OR, UT, WA, WY	Bays 249–264 (1883–2010) Westlaw US

STATE LEGISLATION

Each state has its own constitution and legislation. State legislation generally follows a similar process to the federal system whereby statutes are published chronologically as session laws and then codified. State codes and legislation can be searched across Westlaw US and Lexis US in the Library and the individual state legislature websites. Directories to state legislature websites are available through Congress.gov and the Cornell Legal Information Institute.

Uniform Laws

Uniform Laws are drafts of proposed legislation for consideration by each state. Some uniform laws have been widely adopted by all states, others are rarely adopted or significantly altered.

Uniform Laws Annotated contains the text of uniform and model laws adopted by at least one state and is available in the Library through Westlaw US. The Library also holds some common uniform laws, including the **Uniform Commercial Code** which is also available electronically in the Library via HeinOnline.

CITATION

The most widely used legal citation system is outlined in the **Bluebook: A Uniform System of Citation**, although some courts have their own citation rules. **Prince's Dictionary of Legal Abbreviations** is another useful source for decoding U.S. legal abbreviations and is available from the Library Enquiry Desk along with the *Bluebook*.

U.S. case law citations usually contain a volume number, an abbreviation for the report, and a page number. The court abbreviation and date should be given in parenthesis at the end of the citation, except for Supreme Court opinions, for which only the date needs to be provided.

In the National Reporter System, a reporter begins a new series once the previous one reaches a certain size. Volume numbering restarts in each new series, and the report citation will include a distinguishable series number abbreviation, for example 2d, 3d, 4th, etc.

Citation examples:

Gideon v Wainwright, 372 U.S. 335 (1963).

1963 federal U.S. Supreme Court opinion reported in volume 372 of the United States Reports at page 335.

Schoenthal v. Raoul, 150 F.4th 889 (7th Cir. 2025).

2025 federal U.S. Court of Appeals, Seventh Circuit opinion reported in volume 150 of the Federal Reporter, fourth series at page 889.

Michel v. Petco Animal Supplies Stores, Inc., 404 F. Supp. 3d 685 (E.D.N.Y. 2017).

2017 federal U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of New York opinion reported in volume 404 of the Federal Supplement, third series at page 685.

People v. McRunels, 603 N.W.2d 95 (Mich. Ct. App. 1999).

1999 state Court of Appeals of Michigan opinion reported in volume 603 of the North Western Reporter, second series at page 95.

ONLINE RESOURCES FOR U.S. LAW

American Bar Association's Lawlink: a gateway to resources on federal, state and international legislation, the American legal profession, legal research and business and reference information:

Caselaw Access Project (CAP): Provides free access to all official, book-published state and federal United States case law.

Code of Federal Regulations: Issued by the federal government, these regulations are equivalent to UK statutory instrument and are continually updated.

Congress.gov: The official website for U.S. federal legislative information providing access to bills, resolutions, slip laws, and Statutes at Large.

CourtListener: A free legal research website containing millions of legal opinions from federal and state courts.

FindLaw: A free site covering Federal and State codes, statutes, and regulations. Contains documents and background information on U.S. courts and government as well as Supreme Court decisions since 1999 and opinions from Courts of Appeal.

Google Scholar: Full text legal opinions from U.S. federal and state district, appellate and supreme courts, as well as links to other opinions and articles citing them. Use "Advanced Scholar Search".

Government Printing Office (GPO): Provides public access to official government information, e.g. history of bills with full text of each version and signed public and private laws, Statutes at Large, Congressional debates, U.S.C. unannotated back to 1995, Federal Register and Code of Federal Regulations, and federal slip opinions.

Justia: Basic docket information for federal district courts and courts of appeals (2004-) useful for finding out about pending appeals.

Legal Information Institute, Cornell University: Text of federal and state legislation, court opinions and law directories helpful for searching codes and updating GPO site.

National Center for State Courts Library: NCSC, State Justice Institute and other materials dating back to 1971 and covering all areas of judicial administration.

Public Access to Court Electronic Records (PACER): Case and docket information of federal circuit and district courts, there is a small charge for this service.

U.S. Supreme Court website (supremecourt.gov): Contains United States Reports (1790-) and the latest slip opinions.

Uniform Law Commission: Text of Uniform Laws.

Law Library of Congress Research Center: Information and regular webinars on the legal system, including sources, legal profession and Federal Court system and provides access to the Statutes at Large and U.S.C. (1925-1988, with supplements up to 1994).

NOTES

IN CONGRESS, July 4th 1776 (THE) Unanimous Declaration of the thirteen United States of AMERICA.

When in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation. We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, That whenever any form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate, that Governments long established, should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shewn, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object, evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Tyranny, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future security. Such has been the patient sufferance of these colonies; and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former Systems of Government. The history of the present King of Great-Britain, is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute Tyranny over these States. A Prince whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a Tyrant, is unfit to be the ruler of a free people. Nor have we been wanting in attention to our British brethren. We have warned them from time to time of attempts by their Legislature to extend an unwarrantable Jurisdiction over us. We have reminded them of the circumstances of our emigration and settlement here. We have appealed to their native justice and magnanimity, and we have begged them by the ties of our common kindred to disavow those usurpations, which would surely interrupt our commerce, and endanger our lives and property. We have shown them, that we felt the same sense of justice and of magnanimity. We must, therefore, implore them to consider the necessity which demands our separation, and hold them as we hold the rest of mankind, as creatures of the same rights and of the same obligations. We must, therefore, implore them to consider the necessity which demands our separation, and hold them as we hold the rest of mankind, as creatures of the same rights and of the same obligations. We must, therefore, implore them to consider the necessity which demands our separation, and hold them as we hold the rest of mankind, as creatures of the same rights and of the same obligations.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA. General Congress, Assembled, appearing to the **SUPREME JUDGE** of the world for the multitude of our calamities. Do, in the Name and by Authority of the good People of these Colonies, solemnly publish and Declare, That these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be, **FREE AND INDEPENDENT STATES;** that they are, absolved from all Allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great-Britain, is and ought to be totally dissolved; and that as to all other Acts and Measures which the said States may, of Right do, for the support of this Declaration, with firm reliance on the Protection of **DIVINE PROVIDENCE, WE** mutually pledge to each other our **LIVES, our FORTUNES, and our sacred HONOR.**

John Hancock Samuel Adams John Adams John Jay George Wythe Richard B. Lee Th: Jefferson Ben: Harrison Th: Nelson James Lightfoot Lee Carver Bradenbury	Robert Morris Benjamin Rush Ben: Franklin John Morton George Smith Geo: Taylor James Wilson W: Ross Cesar Rodney George Taylor Th: M. King	Elbridge Gerry John Livingston Sam: Lewis Lewis Morris John Smith Rich: Stockton Law: Muhlenberg Sam: B. Kent John Hart John Clark	Joshua Bartlett W: Mifflin Sam: Adams John Adams Rob: Frazer George Gerry Step: Hopkins William Ellery Proger Mernan Sam: Huntington W: Mifflin Oliver Wolcott Matthew Thornton
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Richard Rush
Secretary of State

Sept. 17, 1776

The foregoing copy of the Declaration of Independence has been collected into the original instrument and found correct. These copies are to be kept in the custody of the Secretary of State, and to be produced to the public on demand.

MEMBERS OF THE MIDDLE TEMPLE.

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