

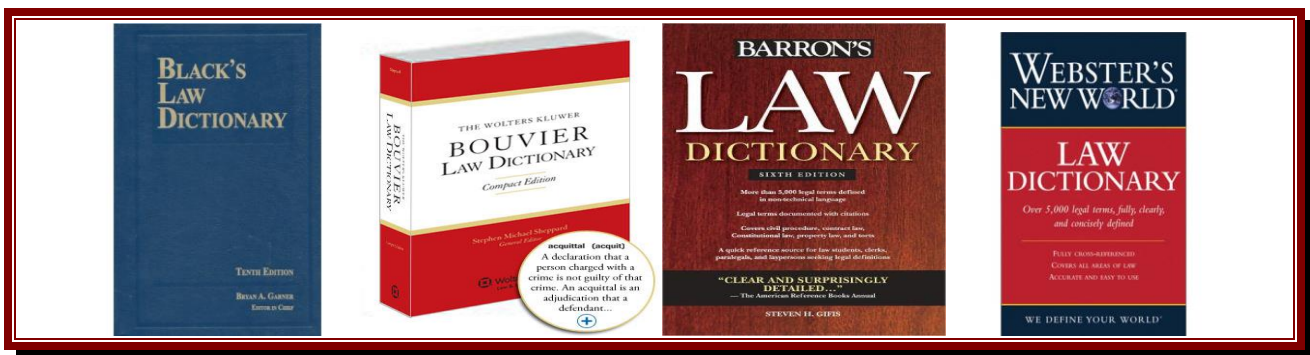
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## *Pathfinder Series*

Patrina Epperson, Circulation Librarian

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## Legal Research Glossary



This guide provides brief definitions of some of the more frequently used terms in Legal Research. This glossary is limited in scope and the definitions provided are limited to their legal research context.

**Act.** An alternative name for statutory law. When introduced into the first house of the legislature, a piece of proposed legislation is known as a bill. When passed to the next house, it may then be referred to as an act. After enactment, the terms law and act may be used interchangeably.

**Action.** The formal legal demand of one's rights from another person brought in court.

**Adjudication.** The legal process of resolving a dispute; the process of judicially deciding a case.

**Administrative Agency.** A governmental authority, other than a legislature or court, which issues rules and regulations or adjudicates disputes arising under its statutes and regulations. Administrative agencies usually act under authority delegated by the legislature.

**Administrative Law.** The law governing the organization and operation of the executive branch of government (including independent agencies) and the relations of the executive legislature, the judiciary and the public.

**Advance Sheets.** Current pamphlets containing the most current opinions of a court or the courts of several jurisdictions. The volume and page numbers usually are the same as in the subsequently bound volumes of the series, which cover several numbers of the advance sheets.

**ALWD Citation Manual.** A manual of legal citation form prepared by the association of Legal Writing Directors.

**American Digest System.** An index of legal propositions showing which cases support each proposition covering all American courts of last resort, state and federal , from 1658 to present. Digests consist of series of paragraphs, arranged by topic, that provide brief abstracts (or digests) of opinions rendered by the courts. To be used only as a finding tool and should not be relied upon as an authority of any kind.

**American Jurisprudence (*Am. Jur.*).** A legal encyclopedia that provides a non-critical, textual statement of substantive and procedural law. It sets forth points of law, together with discussions of legal subjects and citations to controlling cases that interpret and construe that point of law.

**American Jurisprudence Proof of Facts.** A multi-volume set that provides a guide for lawyers in the organization and preparation of materials for trial and in the examination of witnesses. Designed to assist in obtaining information from clients, taking depositions, preparing briefs and also includes check lists and planning guides.

**American Jurisprudence Trials.** This multi-volume set is a treatise on trial practice. The first six volumes cover matters common to all types of trial practice. The remaining volumes, entitled *Model Trials*, deal with the handling of specific types of trials such as personal injury, business-related and criminal.

**American Law Reports (*A.L.R.*).**

A publication which provides detailed articles about specific legal issues, each of which is accompanied by an extensive list of citations and references to other articles.

**Amicus curiae.** (Latin “friend of the court) a party with strong interest in or views on the subject matter of the dispute will petition the court for permission to file a brief, ostensibly on behalf of a party but actually to suggest a rationale consistent with its own views.

**Annotation.** A brief summary of the facts and decision in a case enhanced with editorial comments and citations to additional resources.

**Appellant.** The party who requests that a higher court review the actions of a lower court.

**Appellate.** Of or relating to a case which is on appeal. An appellate opinion is issued by a court which has heard an appeal.

**Appellate brief.** Written arguments by counsel required to be filed with appellate court on why the trial court acted correctly (appellee's brief) or incorrectly (appellant's brief).

**Appellate court.** A court with jurisdiction to review decisions of lower courts or administrative agencies.

**Appellee.** The party against whom an appeal is taken (usually, but not always, the winner in the lower court).

**Atlantic Reporter.** One of seven regional reporters of the National Reporter System that contains every published decision from Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont and the decisions of the District of Columbia Municipal Court of Appeals, from 1885 to date.

**Authority.** That which can bind or influence the decision of a court. Material with which a court must comply is binding authority. Case law, legislation, constitutions, administrative regulations, and writings about the law are all legal authority. *See Primary Authority, Mandatory Authority, Persuasive Authority and Secondary Authority.*

**Bail.** Security given, in the form of bail bond or cash, as a guarantee that released prisoners will present themselves for trial. This security may be lost if the released person does not appear in court at the appointed time.

**Ballantine's.** A popular legal dictionary.

**Bar Journal.** A periodical intended for legal practitioners. Bar journal articles are typically brief with very few footnotes.

**Bieber's.** A legal reference book which lists and explains commonly used legal abbreviations.

**Bill.** A proposed law presented to a legislature by a member of that legislature.

**Binding Authority.** *See Authority.*

**Black's.** *Black's Law Dictionary*, a dictionary of legal terms.

**Black Letter Law.** An informal term indicating the basic principles of law generally accepted by the courts and/or embodied in the statutes of a particular jurisdiction.

**Bluebook.** Also known as *A Uniform System of Citation*, the Bluebook is the style manual which explains how to cite legal documents. To "bluebook" an article is to check it for conformity to the standards explained in the Bluebook.

**Boolean Logic.** A form of search strategy used in databases, such as Westlaw and LexisNexis. In a Boolean search, connectors such as AND, OR, and NOT are used to construct a complex search command. The command "fungible and gasoline" for example, retrieves documents in which the term fungible and the term gasoline both appear. Compare with NATURAL LANGUAGE.

**Bouvier's.** A legal dictionary.

**Brief (of a case).** 1. A written pleading submitted to a court in which a party summarizes the facts of the case and presents legal authority in support of his position.  
2. A summary of a case in which the major elements of the case (parties, history, holding, and rationale) are summarized. Usually prepared by law students after reading an opinion for class.

**Bureau of National Affairs, Inc. (BNA).** A commercial vendor that provides print materials and databases which have the latest news and analysis of legislative, regulatory, and legal developments in several different industries including banking, tax, antitrust, international trade, etc.

**Caption.** A heading on all pleadings submitted to the court. It states basic information such as the parties names, court and case number.

**Case.** A term that most often refers to a lawsuit. It can also refer to a written decision by a judge -- or for an appellate case, a panel of judges.

**Case in point.** A judicial opinion which deals with a fact situation similar to the one being researched and substantiates a point of law to be asserted. (Also called "Case on All Fours.")

**Case law.** The collection of reported cases that form the body of law within a given jurisdiction.

**Casebook.** A textbook, commonly used in law school, which presents excerpts of appellate opinions combined with comments and questions from the authors, who are typically law professors.

**Cause of Action.** A claim in law and in fact sufficient to bring the case to court; the grounds of an action. (Example: breach of contract.)

**Certiorari (*cert.*).** A writ issued by a superior to an inferior court requiring the latter to produce the records of a particular case tried therein. It is most commonly used to refer to the Supreme Court of the United States, which uses the writ of certiorari as a discretionary device to choose the cases it wishes to hear. The term's origin is Latin, meaning to be informed of.

**Century Digest.** A publication that digests cases from 1658 to 1896. Because the *National Reporter System* did not exist during this period, the Century Digest does not contain Key Numbers and uses a topical arrangement.

**Circuit.** A division of the United States Court of Appeals. There are currently 11 numbered Circuits encompassing the fifty states, as well as a D.C. Circuit and a Federal Circuit.

**Citation.** The reference to authority necessary to substantiate the validity of one's argument or position. Citation to authority and supporting references is both important and extensive in any form of legal writing. Citation form is also given emphasis in legal writing.

**Citators.** A set of books and online sources that provide the subsequent judicial history and interpretation of reported cases or list of cases and legislative enactments construing, applying, or affecting statutes. In America, the most widely used citators are Shepard's Citations and KeyCite.

**Cited case.** A case that is referred to by other cases.

**Citing case.** The case that refers to the cited case.

**Code.** In popular usage, a compilation of statutes. Technically, in a code, the laws in force and judicial decrees having the force of law are rewritten and arranged in classified order. Repealed and temporary acts are eliminated and the revision is reenacted.

**Codification.** The process of collecting and arranging systematically, usually by subject, the laws of a state or country.

**Code of Federal Regulations (CFR).** The annual collection of executive-agency regulations published in the daily *Federal Register*, combined with previously issued regulations that are still in effect.

**Committee Reports.** A written report recommending passage of a bill prepared by one or more committees that have jurisdiction over the subject matter of the bill they have been assigned after it has been introduced into either the House or the Senate. The report usually sets forth the revised text of the bill, if any; the changes made in committee; an analysis of the intent and the content of the proposed legislation and the rationale behind the committee's recommendation.

**Common Law.** The origin of the Anglo-American legal systems. English common law was largely customary law and unwritten, until discovered, applied, and reported by the courts of law. In theory, the common law courts did not create law but rather discovered it in the customs and habits of the English people. The strength of the judicial system in preparliamentary days is one reason for the continued emphasis in common law systems on case law. In a narrow sense, common law is the phrase still used to distinguish case law from statutory law.

**Compiled Statues.** In popular usage, a code. Technically, it is a compilation of acts printed verbatim as originally enacted but in a new classified order. The text is not modified; however, repealed and temporary acts are omitted.

**Concurring Opinions.** A separate written opinion explaining a vote cast by a judge in favor of the judgement reached, often on grounds differing from those expressed in the opinion or opinions explaining the judgement.

**Congressional Index.** A loose-leaf service published by Commerce Clearing House, Inc. (CCH) that is updated weekly to provide information of Congressional activities while Congress is in session and for several weeks thereafter until all public bills and resolutions sent to the President have been acted upon. New volumes are issued for each Congress.

**Congressional Information Service (CIS).** Provides indexes to locate legislation where some action has occurred after the introduction of the bill and helps to simplify the method of compiling a federal legislative history.

**Congressional Record.** The published record of the daily proceedings in the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives.

**Connector.** See *Boolean Logic*.

**Consolidated Statues.** In popular usage, a code. Technically, it is a compilation of acts rewritten, arranged in classified order, and reenacted. Repealed and temporary acts are eliminated.

**Constitution.** The system of fundamental principles by which a political body or organization governs itself. Most national constitutions are written; the English and Israeli constitutions are unwritten.

**Corpus Juris Secundum (C.J.S.).** A legal encyclopedia of U.S. law that provides a clear statement of each area of law including areas of the law that are evolving and provides footnoted citations to case law and other primary sources of law. It is updated with annual supplements to reflect modern developments in the law. Entire volumes are revised and reissued periodically as the supplements become large enough.

**Court Decision.** The disposition of the case by the court. See OPINION.

**Court Rules.** Rules of procedure promulgated to govern civil and criminal practice before the courts.

**Cumulative.** Including all the amounts previously added

**Current Law Index (CLI).** A publication which indexes periodicals.

**Decision.** See *Court Decision*.

**Decennial Digest.** One of the titles a part of the American Digest System that classifies case decisions by topic chronologically. The digest contains summaries of cases during the period from 1897 to 1905 and for every ten year period until 1976, and every five years thereafter.

**Defendant.** The person against whom a lawsuit is brought in a civil court; in criminal court, it is the person against whom criminal charges are brought.

**Demurrer.** A means of objecting to the sufficiency in law of a pleading by admitting the actual allegations made, but disputing that they frame an adequate legal chain.

### **Descriptive Word Index (of Digests)**

An alphabetically arranged aid that contains key words and phrases and is used to locate cases that have discussed a particular topic. They are usually a part of all case digests.

**Dictum.** See *Obiter Dictum*.

**Digest.** A publication which organizes cases by subject matter.

**Docket Number.** A number, sequentially assigned by the clerk at the outset to a lawsuit brought to a court for adjudication.

**Encyclopedia.** A legal encyclopedia provides outlines of general areas of law and lists citations to supporting cases. Useful for a beginner who needs a basic introduction on a particular area.

**Executive Agreement.** An international agreement, not a treaty, concluded by the President without senatorial consent on the President's authority as Commander-in-Chief and director of foreign relations. The distinction between treaty and executive agreement is complicated and often of questionable constitutionality, but the import of such agreements as that of Yalta or Potsdam is unquestionably great.

**Executive Order.** An order issued by the President under specific authority granted to the President by Congress. There is no precise distinction between a presidential proclamation and an executive order;

however, a proclamation generally cover matters of widespread interest, and an executive order often relates to the conduct of government business or to organization of the executive department. Every act of the President authorizing or directing the performance of an act, in its general context, is an executive order. See PRESIDENTIAL PROCLAMATION.

**Federal Reporter** (*F.*, *F.2d* or *F.3d*). A reporter which includes federal decisions both trial and appellate.

**Federal Digest** (*Federal Practice Digest*, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>). The digests to federal cases decided in the U.S. Supreme Court, Court of Appeals, district courts, Claims Court, bankruptcy courts, Court of Military Appeals, the Courts of Military Review, and other federal courts.

**Federal Register**. A daily publication in which U.S. administrative agencies publish their regulations for public comment.

**Federal Supplement** (*F. Supp.*, *F. Supp 2d*, *F. Supp 3d*). This case law reporter which is a part of the National Reporter System, contains opinions issued by U.S. District Courts, plus West headnotes and Key Numbers.

**FindLaw**. A portal on the World Wide Web (<http://www.findlaw.com>) providing links to a wide range of law-related information. FindLaw is owned by West Group. Access is free of charge.

**Finding Tool**. A publication which is used to find other publications. Shepards is a finding tool because it is used to find cases which cite another case. A law review is a finding tool because it contains footnotes to other materials.

**Form Books**. Include sample instruments that are helpful in drafting legal documents.

**General Digest**. This digest contains all headnotes, classified according to West's® Key Number System, for state and federal court decisions from all U.S. jurisdictions reported from 2004 to date. The topics are listed in alphabetical order.

**Headnote**. A brief summary of a legal rule or significant facts in a case that precedes the printed opinion in reports.

**HeinOnline**. A database containing page images and searchable text of retrospective legal journals and other legal materials. Hein-On-Line is provided by the William S. Hein & Co., Inc.

**Holding**. The declaration of the conclusion of law reached by the court as to the legal effect of the facts of the case.

**Hornbook**. A publication which provides detailed information about a certain area of law.

**Index to Legal Periodicals (ILP)**. A publication which provides access by subject, author, and title to articles in law reviews.

**InfoTrac**. A database, available from the UNC online catalog, which allows the user to retrieve citations (but not full text) to more than 700,000 articles published since the early 1980s.

**Key Number.** A numerical identifier used in West Group publications to classify judicial opinions according to their subject matter.

**Law Review or Law Journal.** A scholarly academic law journal edited by law students and featuring contributions by law professors and students.

**Legal Resource Index.** Online counterpart to CLI.

**LegalTrac.** An online index to law and legal periodicals with selected full-text articles. It includes major law reviews, legal newsletters, bar association journals and international titles.

**Legislative History.** The record of a law's evolution from bill to statute. A legislative history of a law will typically include committee hearings, committee reports, Congressional debates, and the various drafts of the bill and any amendments which were proposed.

**Lexis Advance.** LexisNexis is a subsidiary of Reed Elsevier PLC. Lexis Advance is a database providing the full text of court decisions, statutes, administrative materials, ALR annotations, law review articles, reporter services, Supreme Court briefs, and other items. Key-word searches, natural language searches, segment searches, and citatory searches are available.

**Lois Law.** A subsidiary of Aspen Publishers. LoisLaw is a database providing the full text of court decisions, statutes, administrative materials, and other sources.

**Looseleaf.** A publication, usually devoted to a specific topic such as taxation or labor law, which consists of pages filed in a loose-leaf binder. The publisher of each loose-leaf service continually sends out new pages which are filed in the binder to keep it current.

**Majority Opinion.** An opinion that is written by one member of the court and represents the principles of law that a majority of his or her colleagues on the court deem operative in a given decision.

**Mandatory Authority.** Authority that a court or other decision maker believes applies to a case and must be followed.

**Microfiche.** A sheet of film, usually 4 x 6 inches or 3 x 5 inches in size, containing miniaturized photographic images of printed text. The term fiche is synonymous with microfiche. Ultrafiche is a type of microfiche containing images that are reduced by a factor of 90 or more.

**Model Codes.** Codes formulated by various groups or institutions to serve as model laws for legislatures, intended to improve existing laws or unify diverse state legislation.

**Model Law.** A law, usually written by a large conference or committee, which is intended as a standard for all states to adopt. (*Note: A model or uniform law has no effect until it is adopted by a state.*)

**National Reporter System.** The network of reporters published by West Group, which attempt to publish and digest all cases of precedential value from all state and federal courts.

**Natural Language.** An online database search strategy using normal English-language sentences or phrases instead of Boolean commands. See *Boolean Logic*.



**North Eastern Reporter.** One of seven regional reporters of the National Reporter System that contains every published decision from Illinois, Indiana, Massachusetts, New York, and Ohio, from 1885 to date.

**North Western Reporter.** One of seven regional reporters of the National Reporter System that contains every published decision from Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota and Wisconsin, from 1879 to date.

**Nutshell.** A series of books, each of which provides brief, easily understood discussions of an area of the law.

**Obiter Dictum.** An incidental comment, not necessary to the formulation of the decision, made by the judge in his or her opinion. Such comments are not binding as precedent.

**Official Reports.** The governmentally approved set of reported cases within a given jurisdiction. These reports are directed by statute. Compare with *Unofficial Reports*.

**Opinion.** A written document, produced by a judge, in which he or she provides a detailed description of the court's decision in a case. The opinion typically addresses the arguments of the plaintiff and defendant, explains which party won the case, and explains why the court decided as it did.

**Oral Argument.** A spoken presentation of reasons for a desired decision directed to an appellate court by attorneys for the parties.

**Pacific Reporter.** One of seven regional reporters of the National Reporter System that contains every published decision from Iowa, Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Kansas, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Oregon, Utah, Washington and Wyoming, from 1883 to date.

**Pamphlet Supplement.** A paperbound supplement to a larger bound volume, usually intended to be discarded eventually.

**Parallel Citation.** A citation to the same case in a different reporter. For example, when citing to North Carolina Reports, provide a parallel citation to the South Eastern Reporter.

**Per Curiam.** Literally, by the court. Usually a short opinion written on behalf of the majority of the court. It may be accompanied by a concurring or dissenting opinion.

**Periodical.** A publication which is continually produced according to a regular schedule. Law reviews, bar journals, magazines, and newspapers are types of periodicals.

**Persuasive Authority.** Authority which is not binding on a court, although the court may choose to follow it.

**Petition.** A formal, written application to a court requesting judicial action on a certain matter.

**Petitioner.** The person presenting a petition to a court, officer, or legislative body; the one who starts an equity proceeding or the one who takes an appeal from a judgment.

**Plaintiff.** The person who brings a lawsuit against another.

**Pleadings.** A formal document in which a party to a legal proceeding sets forth or responds to allegations, claims, denials or defenses. The plaintiff's complaint or declaration is followed by the defendant's answer; subsequent papers may be filed as needed.

**Pocket Part.** A type of supplement which is inserted into a pocket in the back of a bound volume.

**Popular Name Table.** A table listing popular names by which some cases and statutes have become known, and identifying for each popular name the official name and citation of the case or statute.

**Primary Authority.** Constitutions, statutes, administrative regulations issued pursuant to enabling legislation, and case law. Primary authority may be either mandatory or persuasive. All other legal writings are secondary authority and are never binding on courts.

**Primary Source.** Any legal document or publication which is produced by some branch of the government in the course of its lawmaking functions. Opinions, bills, committee reports, statutes, regulations, and executive orders are all examples of primary sources.

**Record.** The documentation, prepared for an appeal, of the trial court proceedings (pleadings, motions, transcripts of examination of witnesses, objections to evidence, rulings, jury instruction, opinion, etc).

**Regional Digest.** Published as a set of four regional digests (Atlantic Digest, North Western Digest, Pacific Digest and South Eastern Digest) that correspond to four of the regional reporters of the National Reporter System. They are arranged by Topic and Key Number classification and include abstracts of all reported cases for each of the state in the region. The digest paragraphs under each Key Number are arranged alphabetically by the states included within the digest.

**Regional Reporter.** A reporter which includes opinions from several states in a region. For example, the South Western Reporter includes cases from Arkansas, Kentucky, Missouri, Tennessee, and Texas.

**Regulations.** Legal rules established by agencies within the executive branch of government.

**Remand.** To send back for further proceedings, as when a higher court sends back to a lower court.

**Reporter.** A publication in which judicial opinions are printed.

**Reports.** (1) court reports—published judicial cases arranged according to some grouping, such as jurisdiction, court, period of time, subject matter, or case significance; and (2) administrative reports or decisions—published decisions of an administrative agency.

**Respondent.** The party who makes an answer to a bill in an equity proceeding or who contends against an appeal.

**Restatements of Law.** Systematic restatements of the existing common law in certain areas, published by the American Law Institute since 1923. The restatements are valuable secondary research sources, but are not binding as law.

**Rules of Court.** The rules regulating practice and procedure before the various courts. In most jurisdictions, these rules are issued by the individual courts or by the highest court in that jurisdiction.

**Secondary Authority.** Authority that explains the law but does not itself establish it, such as a treatise, annotation or law review article.

**Secondary Source.** Any material, such as a Hornbook, Nutshell, periodical, treatise, or Shepard's, which describes or discusses the law but does not establish legal rules. Compare to *Primary Source*.

**Session Law.** Laws enacted by a legislature that are published in bound or pamphlet volumes after adjournment of each regular or special session.

**Shepard's.** A publication which lists every citation to an opinion or statute.

**Shepardize.** To find citations to a case using Shepard's. Usage: "Shepardize the Smith case to see if it's still good law."

**Slip Law.** A legislative enactment published in pamphlet or single sheet form immediately after its passage.

**Slip Opinion.** An individual court case published separately soon after it is decided.

**South Eastern Reporter.** One of seven regional reporters of the National Reporter System that contains every published decision from Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia and West Virginia, from 1887 to date.

**South Western Reporter.** One of seven regional reporters of the National Reporter System that contains every published decision from Arkansas, Kentucky, Missouri, Tennessee and Texas, from 1886 to date.

**Southern Reporter.** One of seven regional reporters of the National Reporter System that contains every published decision from Alabama, Florida, Louisiana and Mississippi, from 1887 to date.

**Star Pagination or Star Paging.** A scheme in reprint editions of court reports used to show where the pages of the text of the official edition begin and end.

**Stare Decisis.** The doctrine of English and American law that states that when a court has formulated a principle of law as applicable to a given set of facts, it will follow that principle and apply it in future cases where the facts are substantially the same. It connotes the decision of present cases on the basis of past precedent.

**Statute.** A legislative enacted law which has been codified and integrated into an official code such as the United States Code or the North Carolina General Statutes.

**Statutes at Large.** The publication in which uncodified United States laws appear.

**Statutes of Limitations.** Laws setting time limits after which a dispute cannot be taken to court.

**Statutory Rules and Orders.** English administrative regulations and orders.

**Substantive Law.** That law which establishes rights and obligations, as distinguished from procedural law, which is concerned with rules for establishing their judicial enforcement supersede—to displace or to supplant one publication or its segment with another.

**Supersede.** To displace or to supplant one publication or its segment with another.

**Supplement.** A regularly issued update to a publication. A supplement may be a separate volume, a loose-leaf insert, or a pocket part. It is important to check the supplement when doing legal research to make sure you have the most current information.

**Supreme Court.** (1) The court of last resort in the federal judicial system (the Supreme Court of the United States also has original jurisdiction in some cases); (2) in state judicial systems, except New York and Massachusetts, the highest appellate court or court of last resort.

**Syllabus.** See *Headnote*.

**Table of Authority.** An alphabetical list of authorities cited in a brief, usually with subcategories for cases, statutes and treatises.

**Table of Cases.** A list of cases, arranged alphabetically by case names, with citations and references to the body of the publication where the cases are found or treated.

**Table of Statutes.** A list of statutes with references to the body of the publication where the statutes are treated or construed.

**Transcript of Record.** The printed record as made up in each case of the proceedings and pleadings necessary for the appellate court to review the history of the case.

**Treatise.** A scholarly work which provides detailed treatment of a particular area of law.

**Treaty.** An agreement between two or more sovereign nations.

**Trial.** A formal judicial examination of evidence and determination of legal claims in an adversary proceeding.

**Uniform Law.** See *Model Law*

**Unofficial Reports.** Those reports published without legislative or judicial authority, i.e., commercial or private publications.

**United States Code (U.S.C.).** A multivolume published codification of federal statutory law.

**United States Code Annotated (U.S.C.A.).** A multivolume publication (West/Thomson Reuters™) of the complete text of the United States Code with historical notes, cross references, case notes of federal and state decisions construing specific Code sections.

**United States Code Congressional and Administrative News (U.S.C.C.A.N.).** A West Group publication in bound volumes that contain full text of new federal laws, Congressional Committee Reports that detail histories of the laws, signing statements, Presidential Proclamations, and Executive Orders. Arranged in chronological order

**United States Code Service (U.S.C.S.).** A multivolume publication (LexisNexis ®) of the complete text of the United States Code with historical notes, cross references, case notes of federal and state decisions construing specific Code sections.

**United States Court of Appeals.** A federal appellate court having jurisdiction to hear cases in one of the 13 judicial circuits of the United States.

**United States District Courts.** A federal trial court having jurisdiction within its judicial district.

**United States Reports.** The official printed record of U.S. Supreme Court cases.

**Venue.** The particular geographical area where a court with jurisdiction may try a case.

**Vernon's.** The publisher of materials dealing with the law of Texas. Vernon's publications include Texas Codes Annotated, Texas Statutes Annotated, Texas Rules Annotated, Texas Civil Statutes and the Texas Constitution.

**WESTLAW Next.** The computerized legal research system of West Group. Westlaw Next provides the full text of court decisions, statutes, administrative materials, ALR annotations, law review articles, reporter services, Supreme Court briefs and many other items.

**Words and Phrases.** A multi-volume set containing judicial definitions, from both state and federal courts, of words and phrases, arranged alphabetically. Each definition contains a citation from the court that provided the definition and is classified by the West Key number system.

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## Online Resources:

Legal Dictionary/Law.com <http://dictionary.law.com/>

Black's Law Dictionary <http://thelawdictionary.org/>

Legal Dictionary – The Free Dictionary <http://legal-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com/>

Nolo's Free Dictionary of Law Terms <http://www.nolo.com/dictionary>

Findlaw Legal Dictionary <http://dictionary.findlaw.com/>

Wex/ Legal Information Institute <https://www.law.cornell.edu/wex>

Dictionary of Law – Oxford Reference  
<http://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/acref/9780199551248.001.0001/acref-9780199551248>

Free Legal Definitions/Lectlaw.com <http://www.lectlaw.com/def.htm>

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**TMSL Library Resources:**

Bieber's dictionary of legal abbreviations, Classified KF246 .B46 2001

Black's law dictionary, Reserve KF156 .B53 2014

Garner's dictionary of legal usage, Reference KF156 .G367 2011

Mexican legal dictionary, Reserve KGF102 .V37 2012

Prince's dictionary of legal citations, Reserve KF246 .P73 2006

The Wolters Kluwer Bouvier law dictionary, Reserve KF156 .W56 2011

West's tax law dictionary, Reserve KF6287 .W473 2015 ed.