



Legal Research, Writing, & Exam Preparation

Legal Research

General

Fundamentals of Legal Research, 9th edition by Steven M. Barkan, Roy M. Mersky, and Donald J. Dunn (Foundation Press, 2009). This book, which is well known to teachers of legal research, is less a procedural “how to” (though it does include a chapter on the legal research process) than an explanation of the history, purpose, and contents of a variety of important legal resources. Heavily illustrated. [KF240 .J32](#).

Where the Law Is: An Introduction to Advanced Legal Research, 4th edition by J. D. S. Armstrong and Christopher A. Knott (West, 2013). Designed for upper-level legal research courses, this book is a valuable resource for learning practical details about the research process. Very good at explaining how a specific resource, such as statutes or cases, fits into a research plan. [KF240 .A76](#).

Basic Legal Research: Tools and Strategies, 4th edition by Amy E. Sloan (Aspen, 2009). An effective tool for learning the fundamentals of legal research and providing step-by-step instructions for how to conduct it. Nicely illustrated with good explanations. [KF240 .S66](#).

Legal Research in a Nutshell, 11th edition by Morris L. Cohen and Kent C. Olson (West, 2013). Continues the tradition of the Nutshell series by putting a lot of information into a single, easy-to-carry volume. A great place to go for a short, accessible explanation of a legal resource. Illustrated. [KF240 .C54](#).

North Carolina

The North Carolina State Constitution, 2d edition by John V. Orth (Oxford, 2013). A complete guide to the North Carolina constitution. Includes a section on its history, commentary on every section of the constitution itself, and a bibliographical essay. [KF7801 1971.A6 O767](#).

North Carolina Legal Research by Scott Childs (Carolina Academic Press, 2010). This book is part of a series of state research guides by the same publisher. It includes chapters on researching secondary sources, constitutions, statutes, legislative history, judicial opinions, and administrative rules and decisions. [KF7475 .C48](#).

North Carolina Legal Research Guide, 2nd edition by Scott Childs and Nick Sexton (Hein, 2009). A 400+-page guide that provides bibliographic and procedural information for legal research in North Carolina. This book covers the structure of the state government, secondary sources, the state legislative process and history, statutory law, caselaw, practice materials, and other aspects of state law. Features both print and online resources. [KF7475 .K37](#).

Legal Writing

Legal Writing and Analysis, 3rd Edition by Linda H. Edwards (Aspen, 2011). A process-driven book that starts with the lawyer’s role, moves on to reading and analyzing the law, then finally to writing outlines, memos, letters, and briefs. Lots of examples are provided of many aspects of the writing process. [KF250 .E378](#).

Garner’s Dictionary of Legal Usage, 3rd Edition by Bryan A. Garner (Oxford University Press, 2011). *Black’s Dictionary*, which Garner edits, defines words. This volume, almost as large as *Black’s* itself, is a style and usage guide for thousands of legal terms. Examples to illustrate usage are taken from cases and other legal sources. [KF156 .G367](#).

Academic Legal Writing: Law Review Articles, Student Notes, Seminar Papers, and Getting on Law Review, 4th Edition by Eugene Volokh (Foundation Press, 2010). A very good resource for law students interested in writing and publishing. Starts with a chapter on finding something to write about, then offers advice on writing introductions, background sections, and conclusions. Includes chapters on how to finish various drafts, how to conduct research, and how to edit a law article. [KF250 .V6](#).

Legal Writing in a Nutshell, 4th Edition by Lynn Bahrych (West, 2009). Another standalone volume in the Nutshell series. Covers the basics of legal composition from the structure of sentences and paragraphs to how a piece of writing should be organized. [KF250 .S68](#).

Clear and Effective Legal Writing, 4th Edition by Veda R. Charrow, Myra K. Erhardt, and Robert P. Charrow (Wolters Kluwer, 2007). A large volume whose contents range from how to read legal materials to the fundamentals of legal writing. Includes lessons on how to approach a writing assignment, how to understanding its context, and tips on how to organize your work. Features a number of writing guidelines, such as how to compose short sentences, keep a parallel structure, and avoid the typical writing problems. A final section explains how to create memos and an appellate brief. Many examples provided. [KF250 .C45](#).

The Redbook: A Manual on Legal Style, 3rd Edition by Bryan A. Garner (West, 2013). An excellent and comprehensive resource for information about mechanics, grammar, and usage. Full of easy to grasp rules on punctuation, capitalization, spelling, citations, and footnotes. Includes a section on preparing specific legal documents such as briefs and memos. [KF250 .G375](#).

Plain English for Lawyers, 5th Edition by Richard C. Wydick (Carolina Academic Press, 2005). A concise and exceedingly useful resource for learning how to write comprehensibly. Includes chapters on omitting surplus words, using the active voice, crafting short sentences, practicing effective word choice and arrangement, and avoiding stylistic pitfalls. [KF250 .W93](#).

Exam Preparation

CALI Lessons

CALI (Computer-Assisted Legal Instruction) lessons are a way to refresh or test your memory about various aspects of the law. You can view them any time, but they are used most often to prepare for exams. To sign in online, go to <http://library.law.unc.edu/services/technology/cali/> and follow the instructions for registering as a student. Both [Student](#) and [Faculty](#) registration information are available on my.law.unc.edu.

Online Exams

Some professors have made their past exams available online on [My Carolina Law](#). There you will be able to search exams by faculty member and/or exam title.

Law School Study Aids

The most popular study aids for law students are volumes in the Nutshell and Examples & Explanations series. A number of these are available in the law library and can be searched on our website at <http://library.law.unc.edu/>. Use the words "nutshell" or "examples and explanations" in a Keyword or Title search to find them.

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