

# FORM AND ACCURACY RESEARCH GUIDE

## H. DOUGLAS BARCLAY LAW LIBRARY

Check the library's [Location Guide](#) and [Summit Catalog](#) for the current location of sources mentioned in this pathfinder.

### **PURPOSE:**

This pathfinder will help you to check the form and accuracy of legal and other citations. Highlighted are finding aids, indexes and research tools most frequently consulted for this type of work. This is not an exhaustive discussion of legal research methodology or a complete overview of the Law Library's resources. *See, e.g.,* Jacobstein, Mersky, Dunn, LEGAL RESEARCH ILLUSTRATED (8th ed. 2002) Reserves **KF240 .J32 2002**. If you have questions that have not been answered in this pathfinder, please ask one of the librarians.

### **OUTLINE:**

#### **I. INTERPRETING CITATIONS**

#### **II. LOCATING SECONDARY AND PRIMARY SOURCES**

#### **III. LOCATING PERIODICALS**

#### **IV. LOCATING GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS**

### **INTERPRETING CITATIONS**

To check the form of an abbreviation or acronym in a citation, begin by looking in these specialized dictionaries:

*Acronyms, Initialisms and Abbreviations Dictionary*

Reference P 365 .A28

*Bieber's Dictionary of Legal Abbreviations on Lexis*

<http://web.lexis.com/xchange/practiceareas/librarian/default.asp>

- Enter a title, e.g., Syracuse Law Review in the "Check a Citation" box and you will retrieve the correct citation form (and multiple forms, if applicable)

***Bieber's Dictionary of Legal Abbreviations***  
Reference KF 246 .B46 (see online version, above)

***Introduction to Basic Legal Citation***  
<http://www.law.cornell.edu/citation/>

***Guide to Federal Government Acronyms***  
Reference JK 464

***World Dictionary of Legal Abbreviations***  
Reference K89 .K38

**OR consult the “Tables of Abbreviations” in these publications:**

***Black's Law Dictionary***  
Reference KF 156 .B53

**Periodical Indexes** (e.g., *Index to Legal Periodicals*, *Current Law Index*)  
Floor 3 index shelves

**To create an abbreviation**, begin by looking in these sources:

Igor I. Kavass, ***Bieber's Dictionary of Legal Abbreviations Reversed***  
Reference K89 .K37

Mary Miles Prince, ***Bieber's Dictionary of Legal Citations***  
Reference KF 245 .P73

***The Bluebook: A Uniform System of Citation, 17<sup>th</sup> ed.***  
Reference & Reserves KF 245. B58

## LOCATING TEXTS AND PRIMARY SOURCES

**To check the accuracy of a citation**, you must locate the source from which the citation derives, then verify the volume and page number.

### A. Check Online Catalog By Author, Title or Keywords

[SUMMIT](#) is the Syracuse University's online 'card' catalog. You can search for known sources by titles or authors, by keywords and phrases, or a combination of elements. For most focused results, use the 'Advanced Search' tab.

For assistance with searching, use the online help screens accessible from the navigation bar at the top of each search screen.

## B. Check the Card Catalog for Historical Materials

Search the card catalog for titles not found in online catalog. The card catalog, situated behind the 'stand-up' terminals across from the Circulation Desk, may be searched by author, title or Library of Congress Subject Headings. Ask a librarian for assistance.

## LOCATING PERIODICALS

### A. Check Journal Titles In [SUMMIT](#)

The Library maintains many periodicals in print, with older volumes in the microfiche collection. To determine if a particular journal is part of the Library's collection, search the online catalog by "Journal Title."

### B. Westlaw & Lexis

*Westlaw* and *Lexis* also provide access to the full text of periodicals. Both services are quite forgiving with citation formats; in other words, if you type in the full title instead Bluebook format, you will still pull up the document. The first page of the document provides complete bluebook citation format. Keep in mind that "Star Pagination," also applies to journals.

**Example:** Laurence H. Tribe, *Essay: the Curvature of Constitutional Space: What Lawyers Can Learn from Modern Physics*, **103 Harvard Law Rev. 1**

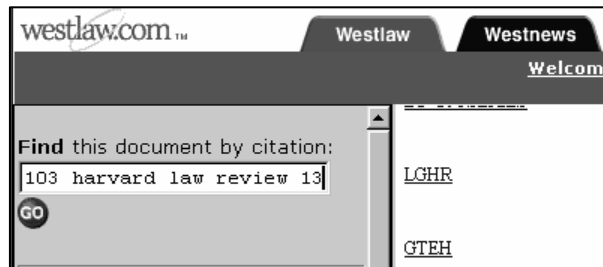
### *LexisNexis*

Click on the "Get a Document" tab and type in the full title if you don't know the correct citation form. You can also enter a specific page number, e.g., 14, if you wished to review a particular page of the text.

**The bluebook citation will appear on page 1 above the title.**

**On Microsoft Internet Explorer, you can go to any page from the 'page' box at the bottom of the screen.**

## Westlaw



## C. Periodical Indexes

FORMAT	COVERAGE	LOCATION
Paper	1886 – present 1980 – present	<i>Index to Legal Periodicals</i> , Index Table Reference, Fl. 3 <i>Current Law Index</i> , Index Table Reference, 3
Lexis	1/77 -	<i>Legal Resource Index (LAWREV;LGLIND)</i>
Westlaw	1980-	<i>Legal Resource Index (LRI)</i>
Internet	8/81 –	<i>Index to Legal Periodicals (COL patrons only)</i>

*Index to Legal Periodicals* and *Current Law Index* are annual publications with monthly supplements organized by subject. There are also case and statute name indexes.

*Index to Legal Periodicals Database* is available through the Law Library's web site at: <http://www.law.syr.edu/lawlibrary/electronic/periodicals.asp>.

ILP online now offers many full-text articles. For instances where no full-text is available, you can link to the online catalog directly from the ILP citation screen.

#### D. Periodicals Published Before 1980

FORMAT	COVERAGE	LOCATION
Paper	1886 – present	<i>Index to Legal Periodicals</i> Index Table Reference, Fl. 3
Internet databases	varies	<i>Hein Online</i> (College of Law access only) <a href="http://www.law.syr.edu/lawlibrary/electronic/periodicals.asp">http://www.law.syr.edu/lawlibrary/electronic/periodicals.asp</a>

The *Index to Legal Periodicals* is an annual print index, with monthly supplements which indexes law reviews and legal journals by broad subject headings. You can also search by case or statute name.

*Hein Online* is a fully searchable, electronic collection of prominent legal journals, focused on the pre-1925 historical era, with complete runs of important titles.

Browse journals alphabetically by title, author or article title.

Search titles, authors and full-text.

Exact page images are displayed, with full ability to cut-and-paste.

#### E. Current Index to Legal Periodicals (CILP)

FORMAT	COVERAGE	LOCATION
Westlaw	Most recent 8 weeks	<i>CILP</i>
Internet databases		<i>CILP</i> (College of Law access only) <a href="http://www.law.syr.edu/lawlibrary/electronic/periodicals.asp">http://www.law.syr.edu/lawlibrary/electronic/periodicals.asp</a>

*CILP* is the most current legal periodical index. It accesses over 500 legal publications including complete tables of content of all journals indexed; articles are indexed within 100 relevant subject headings. The *CILP* service on the Law Library web site is restricted to Syracuse University College of Law faculty, students, and staff.

#### F. Other periodical indexes

FORMAT	COVERAGE	LOCATION
Print	1960 -	<i>Index to Foreign Legal Periodicals</i> , Reference Index Table
Internet database	1985-	<i>Index to Foreign Legal Periodicals</i> <a href="http://www.law.syr.edu/lawlibrary/electronic/periodicals.asp">http://www.law.syr.edu/lawlibrary/electronic/periodicals.asp</a>

In addition to the sources described above, check [SUMMIT](#) for topic specific and non-law periodical indexes.

## LOCATING GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS

### A. Federal Documents

For a general discussion of *Federal Legislative History Research*, see the law library's research guide at: <http://www.law.syr.edu/lawlibrary/electronic/researchguides.asp>

For a general discussion of *Federal Statutes & Codes*, see the law library's research guide at: <http://www.law.syr.edu/lawlibrary/electronic/researchguides.asp>

#### **Citation Forms for United States Government Documents:**

The Bluebook covers basic government document citation forms.

Georgetown has prepared an excellent *Guide to Using the Bluebook – Statutes*, which explains and clarifies the Bluebook rules.

[http://www.ll.georgetown.edu/lib/guides/bluebook5\\_7.html](http://www.ll.georgetown.edu/lib/guides/bluebook5_7.html)

There are a number of comprehensive sources for help in constructing document citations. A few of those are listed here. Please note that the citation forms cited in these sources may deviate from Bluebook formats.

#### **Brief Guide to Citing Government Publications (University of Memphis)**

<http://exlibris.memphis.edu/resource/unclesam/citeweb.html>

#### **Citing Government Information Sources**

##### **Using MLA (Modern Language Association) Style (University of Nevada)**

<http://www.library.unr.edu/depts/bgic/guides/government/cite.html>

#### **CALI Lesson: *Forms of Federal Statutory Publication***

<http://cali.law.umn.edu/lsn/cat-lwr.html>

FORMAT	COVERAGE	LOCATION
Paper Index	1970 – present 1789-1969	<i>CIS Annual Legislative Histories</i> Unclassified Floor 2 <i>CIS US Serial Set Index</i> Bird Library Z1223 .Z9 C65 1975
Microform	1970 – present	<i>CIS Documents</i> Microfiche Unclassified
Westlaw Lexis	varies	<i>Check the online directories for help in locating databases for collections of legislative documents and individual databases for legislative histories of significant acts</i>
Internet	varies	<i>Thomas</i> <a href="http://thomas.loc.gov">http://thomas.loc.gov</a> <i>GPO Access</i> <a href="http://www.access.gpo.gov/">http://www.access.gpo.gov/</a> <i>LexisNexis Academic – CIS and Congressional Databases</i> <a href="http://www.law.syr.edu/lawlibrary/electronic/federal.asp">http://www.law.syr.edu/lawlibrary/electronic/federal.asp</a>

The *CIS Legislative Histories* collection is the most comprehensive source for legislative documents of enacted legislation, 1970-. It contains:

- Legislative histories (indexes and texts) for federal laws enacted from 1970 to the present
- Much of the same material may be found on **LexisNexis Academic – CIS and Congressional** databases.

The *CIS Serial Set Index* at Bird Library provides access to pre-1970 congressional documents.

*Westlaw* contains:

- Individual legislative histories for significant acts
- *United States Code Congressional and Administrative News* (committee reports)
- *Congressional Record*
- Bill status and texts.

*Lexis* contains:

- CIS (this is easier to use in print)
- Individual legislative histories
- *Congressional Record*
- Bill status and texts.

*Thomas*, the congressional database from the Library of Congress, is a good source for:

- Recent congressional bills and committee reports
- Recent bill status and text
- Links to the *Congressional Record*.

*GPOAccess* is the U.S. Government Printing Office's portal to published government information from all branches of government.

## **B. State Documents**

For most states, current documents may be found on the Internet. Collections may reside on a state library home page, a state assembly or senate homepage, an agency site, or an academic law library site. *Westlaw* and *Lexis* also provide some access to state bills and bill tracking records as well as cases, statutes and administrative codes. *Westlaw* has recently launched a state legislative history collection; contents vary by state.

For a discussion of New York State Legislative History Research, see the law library's research guide at: <http://www.law.syr.edu/lawlibrary/electronic/researchguides.asp>

## Citation Forms for State Government Documents

Georgetown's *Guide to Using the Bluebook – Statutes*, explains and clarifies the Bluebook rules on citing state statutes:

[http://www.ll.georgetown.edu/lib/guides/bluebook5\\_7.html](http://www.ll.georgetown.edu/lib/guides/bluebook5_7.html)

<b>FORMAT</b>	<b>COVERAGE</b>	<b>LOCATION</b>
Westlaw	varies by state	<i>Check the current print or online directory for state information</i>
Lexis	varies by state	<i>Check the current print or online directory for state information</i>
Internet	varies	<i>Findlaw- States' Resources</i> <a href="http://www.findlaw.com/11stategov/index.html">http://www.findlaw.com/11stategov/index.html</a> <i>State Web Locator – Chicago Kent</i> <a href="http://www.infoctr.edu/swl">http://www.infoctr.edu/swl</a>
Print	varies	<i>State Yellow Book Reference JK 2403 .S755</i> <i>The Book of States Reference JK 2403 .B6</i>

*Findlaw* is an excellent starting point for state document research. It provides links to district, state and county courts as well as state directories, municipal codes and a search engine for each state's government web sites.

The *State Web Locator* at Chicago-Kent law school is a well-organized site with links to executive, legislative and judicial information in addition to state agencies and departments.