Legal Research Guide

General Legal Resources

Suggested Starting Points

Legal Encyclopedias
Hornbook Series
Nutshell Series

Legal Encyclopedias

Legal Encyclopedias provide entries on a variety of legal topics, with a brief description of the subject matter and citations to related cases.

Print

Corpus Juris Secundum (CJS)
Entries can be located by a general index, table of cases, or table of laws and rules.
Legal Reference, 340.0772 Corpus

Databases

American Jurisprudence 2nd (AmJur)
This resource is available in Westlaw.
After signing in to Westlaw, search for the database on the lower left side of “Westlaw” tab by entering: AMJUR. Enter your search terms in the box or click on “Table of Contents” to browse.

Hornbooks

Hornbooks provide general overviews of legal topics, and are easily identifiable by their dark green color. Schumacher Library owns the following:

Civil Procedure 347.73 Friedenthal
The Law of Property 346.7304 Cunningham
The Law of Torts 346.7303 Dobbs
Prosser and Keaton on the Law of Torts 346.7303 Prosser
Real Estate Finance Law 346.7304 Nelson
General Legal Resources

Nutshell Series

Books in the Nutshell Series provide simple, concise explanations of legal terms and topics. The Schumacher Library owns:

**Civil Procedure** 347.73 Kane
**Family Law** 346.7301 Krause
**Federal Income Taxation of Corporations and Stockholders** 343.7305 Burke
**Insurance Law** 346.73 Dobbyn
**The Law and Policy of Sentencing and Corrections** 345.73 Branham
**The Law of Corporations** 346.73066 Hamilton
**Legal Research** 340.073 Cohen
**Personal Property** 346.047 Burke
**Real Estate Finance** 346.043 Bruce
**Real Property** 346.7304 Bernhardt
**Torts** 346.7303 Kionka
**Uniform Commercial Code** 346.73 Stone
**Uniform Probate Code** 346.052 Averill
**Wills and Trusts** 346.054 Mennell
**Constitutional Law** 342.73 Barron

Law Collection

The Schumacher Library owns several law related books that are available for checkout. To browse our collection, look for the following call numbers:

- 340 Law
- 341 Law of Nations (European Union)
- 342 Constitutional & Administrative Law
- 343 Military, Tax, Trade & Industrial Law
- 344 Labor, Social, Education & Cultural Law
- 345 Criminal Law
- 346 Private Law (Business, Torts, etc.)
- 347 Civil Procedure & Courts
Constitutions

Suggested Starting Point

*The Words We Live By: Your Annotated Guide to the Constitution*

Reference, 342.73 Monk

This resource provides annotations that explain terms and principles contained in the U.S. Constitution.

U.S. and Illinois Constitutions

There are several print and online resources that contain the text of the U.S. and Illinois Constitutions.

Print

*The Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States of America*

342.73 Declaration

*The U.S. Constitution and Fascinating Facts About It*

342.73 Constitution

*Illinois Compiled Statutes Annotated, Volume 1 (U.S. and Illinois Constitutions)*

Legal Reference, 348.773 Illinois

Websites

*U.S. Constitution* (Cornell Legal Information Institute)

http://topics.law.cornell.edu/constitution

*Illinois Constitution* (Illinois General Assembly Website)

http://www.ilga.gov/commission/lrb/conmain.htm

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Statutes & Regulations

United States Code

The United States Code is available in our legal databases and on the web.

*Westlaw*
Sign into Westlaw One Pass, and from the Westlaw tab search the databases from the left side menu for: USCA. Type in terms to search, or “Table of Contents” to browse.

*Website*

Finding Illinois Statutes

The Illinois Compiled Statutes contain an index which allows for searching by topic. Look for the alphabetical topic index in the final volumes.


Just click on “Illinois Compiled Statutes”

Illinois Statutes

Print

The Schumacher Library has up to date volumes of the Illinois Compiled Statutes Annotated and Criminal Law and Family Law statutes in separate volumes.

- Illinois Compiled Statutes, Annotated
- Criminal Law and Procedure
- Family Law and Court Rules

Databases

*Westlaw*
Sign into Westlaw One Pass, and from the Westlaw tab search the databases from the left side menu for: ILLINOIS STATUTES. Select year or annotated/un annotated. Type in terms to search, or “Table of Contents” to browse.

Websites:

Chicago Municipal Code

Print

Legal Reference, 342.09 Chicago

Website

Code of Federal Regulations

The Code of Federal Regulations is available in our legal databases and on the web.

*Westlaw*
Sign into Westlaw One Pass, and from the Westlaw tab search the databases from the left side menu for: CFR. Type in terms to search, or “Table of Contents” to browse.

*Website*

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## Cases

### Federal Cases

Federal Cases are available in our databases.

*Westlaw*

Sign into Westlaw One Pass, and from the Westlaw tab search the databases from the left side menu for—ALLFEDS. Type in terms to search, or “Table of Contents” to browse.

### Websites

Recent opinions are available for browsing at the following websites:

*U.S. Supreme Court*


Supreme Court opinions and transcripts of oral arguments are available on the Supreme Court website.

*U.S. Court of Appeals, 7th Circuit*

http://www.ca7.uscourts.gov/

Seventh Circuit opinions and recordings of oral arguments are available on its website.

### Illinois Cases

#### Print

The Schumacher Library carries the Illinois Reports through 2006.

Legal Reference, 348.773, Illinois

#### Databases

*Westlaw*

Sign into Westlaw One Pass, and from the Westlaw tab search the databases from the left side menu for: IL-CS—ALL to search all cases, Federal and State. Type in terms to search, or “Search by Party Name.”

*Website*

Opinions dating from 1996 can be viewed on The Illinois Courts website.

http://www.state.il.us/court/Opinions/archive.asp

### Finding Cases

One can locate cases on particular topics by searching or browsing American Jurisprudence 2d (available in *Westlaw*) and consulting the footnotes. In addition, the American Law Reports are searchable in *Westlaw*, and resulting articles provide a link to a table of cases by jurisdiction.

Law Review and Journal articles can also be helpful in finding related cases. These articles are available by searching for LAW-REV-PRO in *Westlaw* database search.

Digests are a good starting point to find Illinois cases on a particular topic.

The Schumacher Library owns *West’s Illinois Digests, 2nd*, Legal Reference, 348.773 Illinois

### Case History and Related Cases

One can easily view a case’s subsequent history and find other cases addressing the same issue.

*Westlaw*

Enter the citation for your case and review the information contained in the links next to “KeyCite” in the left hand column.

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Forms and Practice Guides

Forms

Print

*Paralegal Litigation: Forms and Procedures*

This resource provides several sample forms, letters, and pleadings. Legal Reference, 347.73 Fawcett-Del

*West’s Legal Forms*

This multi-volume resource provides an overview of various legal topics and accompanying sample forms. Legal Reference, 347.7355 West’s

*Nichols Illinois Civil Practice with Forms*

This resource provides an overview of civil practice and procedure with forms and practice tips. Legal Reference, 347.773 Nichols

Databases

The United States Code Annotated contains an appendix of forms.

*Westlaw*

Sign into Westlaw One Pass, and from the Westlaw tab search the databases from the left side menu for—USCA, then select “Table of Contents,” “Federal Rules of Civil Procedure” and “Appendix of Forms” to browse available forms.

Websites

*Clerk of the Circuit Court of Cook County:* [www.cookcountyclerkofcourt.org](http://www.cookcountyclerkofcourt.org)

Select “Court Forms” to search or browse by title.


Practice Guides

The Illinois Institute for Continuing Legal Education guides provide practical tips and information including a table of related cases and some sample pleadings. The Schumacher Library owns:

- *Contract Law*
- *Illinois Causes of Action-Elements, Forms & Winning Tips*
- *Illinois Civil Practice*
- *Illinois Family Law*
- *Illinois Juvenile Law and Practice*
- *Proving Fault in Auto Accident Cases*

Handbooks

*Westlaw* contains handbooks that explain selected trial processes. The *Illinois Trial Law Handbook* (Criminal, Criminal Sentencing, and Homicide), and the *Illinois Criminal Trial Handbook-DUI* can be viewed by selecting the “Law” tab, then “Content List,” and “Other Reference Materials.”