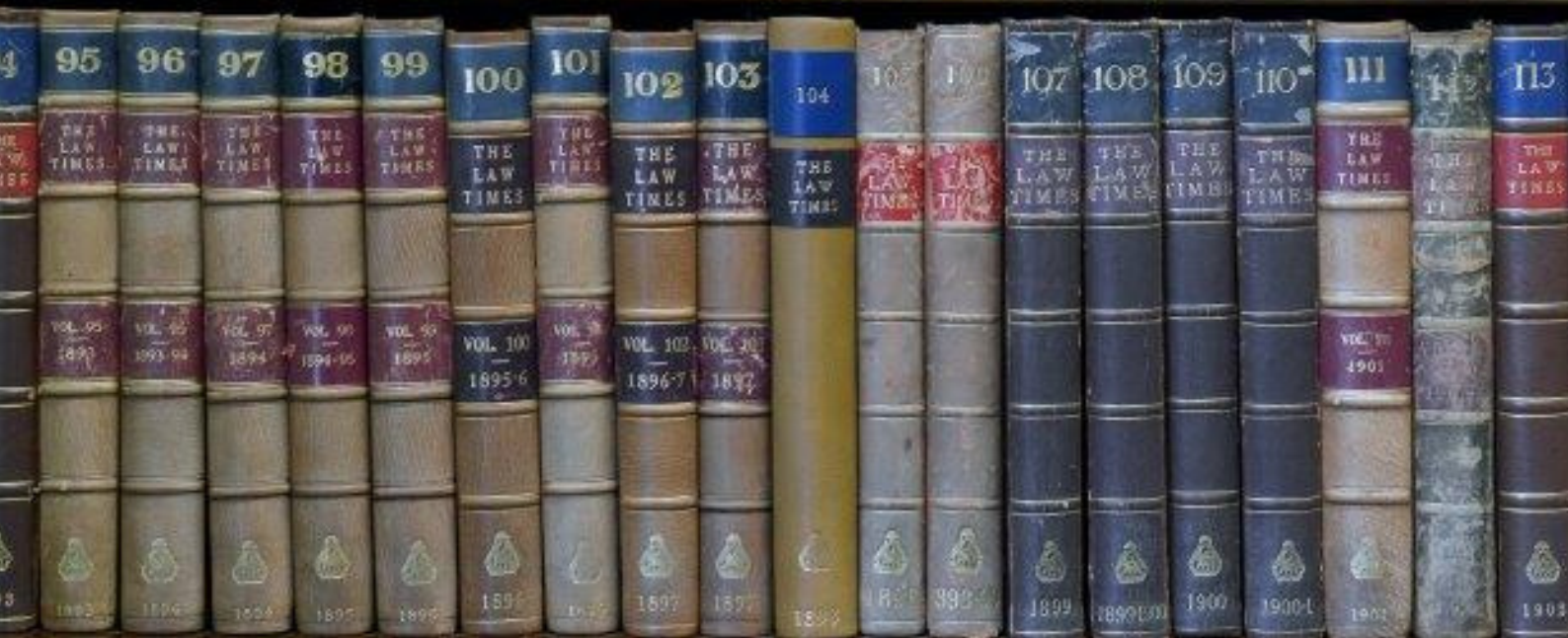
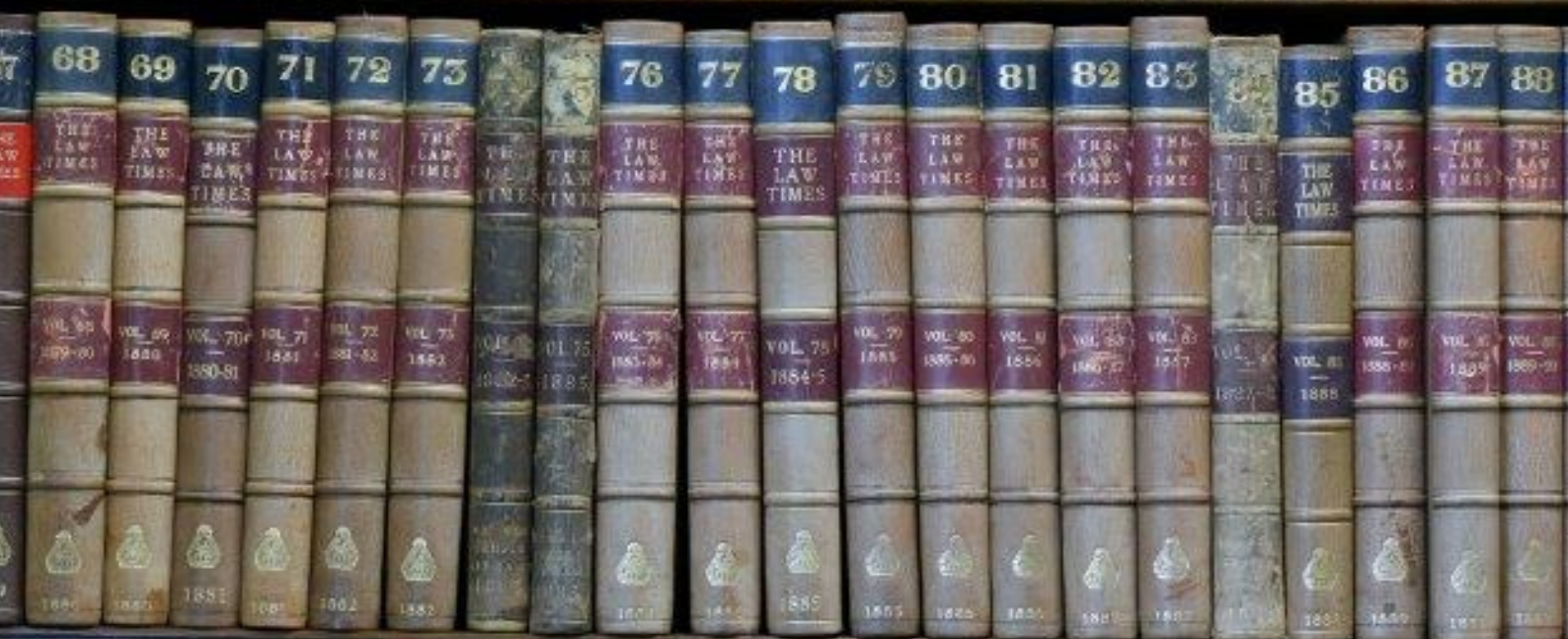
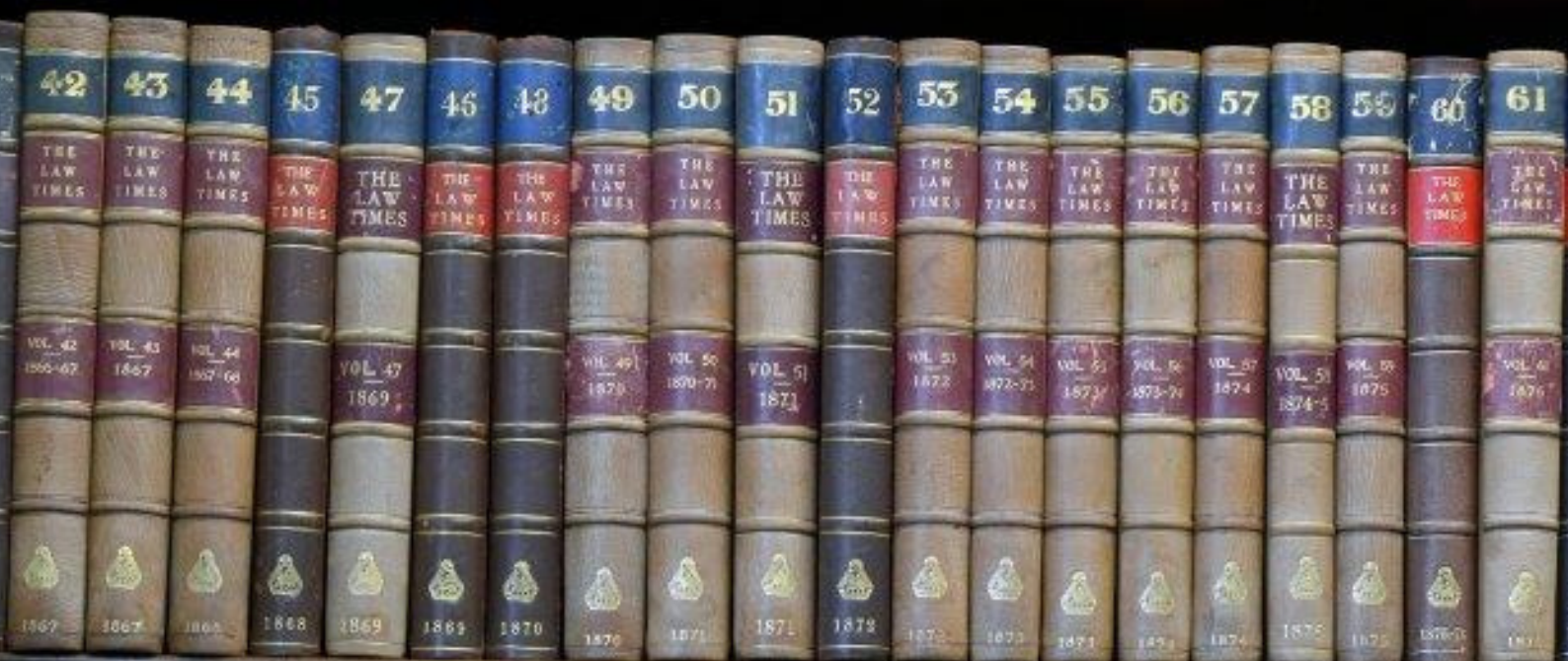


GUIDE & INTRODUCTION TO LEGAL RESEARCH





OPENING HOURS

Legal Term

Monday – Friday 9:00 – 19:00

Every 4th Saturday (on a rota with the other Inns) 10:00 – 17:00

Legal Vacations

Monday – Friday 9:00 – 17:30

The Library closes on public holidays and for two weeks in August. It occasionally closes early for special events. Details can be found on notice boards, at the Library entrance and on our website.

Enquiry Desk

The desk is staffed by skilled librarians who are there to help you with enquiries in person, by telephone or email. Regular tours are offered to provide an introduction to the Library. Additionally, librarians can assist with specific enquiries and there is a range of specialist resources available that provide advanced guidance regarding research skills in a particular subject or jurisdiction.

Legal Research Training

The Library runs qualifying sessions and provides continuing professional development training throughout the year. Staff can also provide one-to-one training for members.

Our nano-training platform offers short videos on a range of legal topics and resources, delivering bite-sized guidance. The videos demonstrate how to access and use specific legal materials.

For further details on our training offerings, please visit the training section of our website.

ACCESS



There is a wheelchair ramp up to the building entrance and lift access from ground to fourth floor. Entrance doors to the Ashley Building are automated. The Library is located on floors 1-3. For assistance with access to interior doors to Library floors, please call a member of the Library team on 020 7427 4830 or ask Front of House at the building entrance to contact the Library team.

There are accessible toilets on the ground and fourth floors. The basement floor has additional wheelchair-accessible toilets and baby-changing facilities. For access to/from the basement floor, please get in touch with Security on 020 7797 7768.

Within the Library, the Library team are always happy to assist with the retrieval of items from shelves too high or too low. For any assistance with access, please come to the enquiry desk, or email us at library@middletemple.org.uk if you have any concerns prior to your visit.

There is a magnifier and headphones available at the Enquiry Desk. There is a portable induction loop at the Enquiry Desk. Staff can request PDFs of books held by the Library from the publishers upon application.

LIBRARY SERVICES



All print materials available in the Library are catalogued, along with all electronic titles available online through the databases or general Internet sources. The other three Inn Library collections can be searched through our catalogue. Printed lists of key holdings are available for quick reference in the Library.

Textbooks are available for overnight and weekend loan to members of any Inn. Books may be borrowed one hour before the Library closes and must be returned by 10am on the next day the Library is open.

There are two iPads with ebooks which can be borrowed for up to one week for a small fee. The Library can provide copies of law reports, journal articles, textbook extracts, etc. by email. Requests must be made using the copyright declaration form, which is available via our website.

COMPUTERS & ONLINE SERVICES

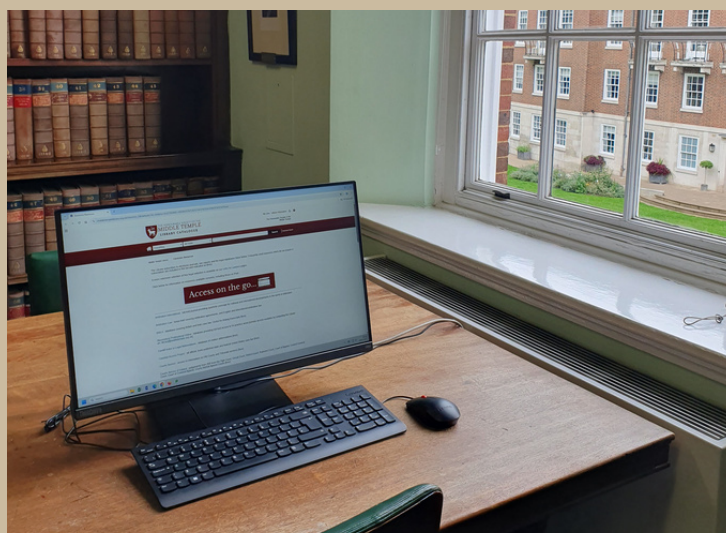
Computer terminals located on each floor are equipped with Internet access and Microsoft Office. No booking or log-in is required. USB memory sticks can be purchased at the enquiry desk. Free Wi-Fi is available throughout the Library.

Printing is available from any Library terminal. Printers are located on the main floor and gallery. There are two photocopiers on the main floor and one on the gallery. The charge is 10p per sheet for copying or printing, and 5p per sheet for scanning.

The Library website lists the specialist legal databases to which the Library subscribes along with some useful free resources.

The following is a selection of the subscription databases available for free use in the Library:

- Bloomsbury Professional Online
- Hein Online
- ICLR Online
- Kluwer Arbitration & Competition
- Lexis+
- Lexis Practical Guidance
- LexisNexis Protégé
- Lexis US
- LLMC Digital
- Oxford Academic
- Practical Law
- Public Information Online
- UK Parliamentary Papers
- Westlaw UK
- Westlaw US



IPADS & EBOOKS

The Library has two iPads, which are loaded with ebooks and can be borrowed for £1 per day or £5 for a week. Members can also request access to books on ProView. Speak to staff for details.

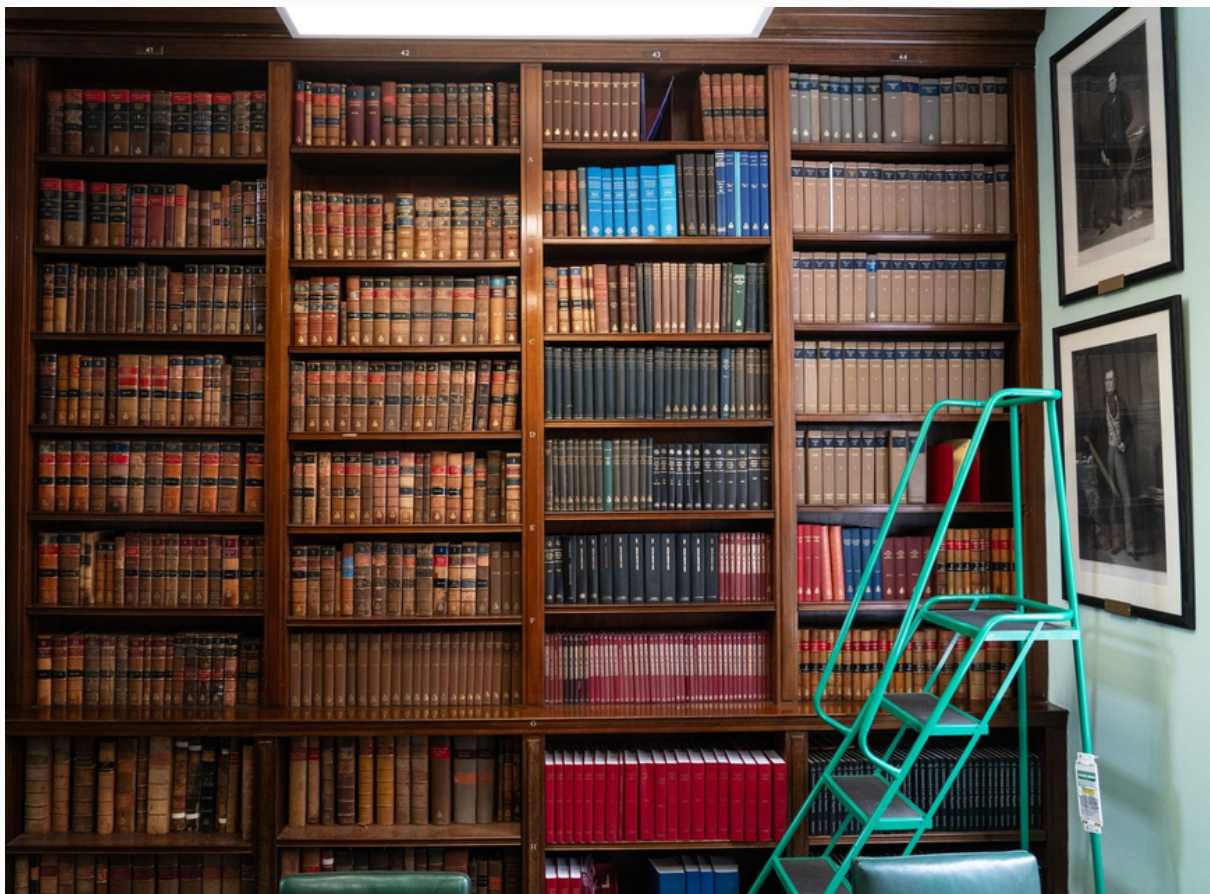
Over 20 titles are available including:

- Archbold: Criminal Pleading, Evidence and Practice
- Blackstone's Criminal Practice
- Charlesworth & Percy on Negligence
- Chitty on Contracts
- Civil Procedure (The White Book)
- Clerk and Lindsell on Torts



DOCUMENT DELIVERY SERVICE

The Library provides an efficient document delivery service to assist members of the Inns of Court with receiving documents remotely. The Library can scan a number of documents, such as chapters from textbooks, articles from journals, cases from law reports and more. This also includes documents from specialist series, such as Lloyd's Law Reports and Lloyd's Reinsurance Law Reports. This service is offered to members Monday Friday, 10am – 4pm for a small fee. Restrictions on copyrighted materials apply. For further details please see our website.



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INTERLIBRARY LOAN SERVICE

The Library operates an interlibrary loan scheme allowing Middle Temple members to request material not held by Middle Temple Library or other Inns of Court libraries. We can borrow print resources from other institutions participating in interlibrary lending and request electronic delivery of articles. Fees apply for this service and lending libraries may place restrictions on the use of borrowed materials. More details are available on our website.



TELEPHONE ROOMS

There are two rooms in the Library where you can take private telephone calls. Both have monitors which can be used to connect your laptop up to, via an HDMI cable. You can also book these rooms in advance for meetings or remote hearings by speaking to a member of staff.



LIBRARY HISTORY

The Library is known to have existed prior to 1540 as archive records show, but was re-founded in 1641 when Robert Ashley (1565 - 1641) bequeathed his collection of books to the Inn. At that time the four Inns were commonly regarded as the third university of England and as well as providing instruction in the law, they provided members with a gentleman's education which encompassed divinity, philosophy, arts and sciences.

Since then, the Library has been housed in various places around the Inn, including what is now the Parliament Chamber. A new library was built and opened in 1861 by the then Prince of Wales; it stood across the garden from the present building. That building was bombed twice in WWII and too heavily damaged to be saved. Fortunately, the Molyneux Globes had already been sent out of London for safe-keeping, and the majority of the books were saved.

Following the war the collections were housed temporarily in two prefabricated structures in Brick Court. The present building, designed by Sir Edward Maufe, was opened in 1958 by the Queen Mother. Today the library houses over 250,000 volumes.



LIBRARY COLLECTIONS

FIRST FLOOR

Textbooks & Loose-leafs

The Library subscribes to an extensive range of major titles and holds previous editions on the gallery. English and international law textbooks are located on the main floor and are arranged by subject. All textbooks are classed according to the Moys Classification Scheme for law. The catalogue will provide a Moys classmark, for example KM 587 BAN is applied to *Banks on Sentence*. Guides to using Moys can be found in the Library. The Common Law Series and City Law School manuals are kept in the Enquiry Area.

Although the Library has material on all areas of UK law, each of the Inn libraries have subject concentrations. Some of the topics covered at Middle Temple include employment, insurance and shipping law. A list of all subject specialities is provided on the last two pages of this guide. Each Inn library specialises in different jurisdictions: Middle Temple in EU & US law, Lincoln's Inn & Inner Temple in Commonwealth law, and Gray's Inn in international law.

Law Reports

Most nominate reports are held, dating back to the sixteenth century, as well as all major modern titles and series for England and Wales. The Library subscribes to a range of specialist titles such as Building Law Reports, Criminal Appeal Reports and Lloyd's Law Reports. The collection is complemented by major digests and citators, as well as our database services.

Journals, Ecclesiastical & Other Titles

A range of journals is available to supplement the textbooks and law reports. The collection includes general publications such as Counsel and practical works such as The Criminal Law Review. A complete run of The London Gazette from 1665 to date is also available.

The Library has always maintained good collections of divinity and canon law and established the Ecclesiastical Collection when a set of Consistory Court Reports were donated to the Library by the Ecclesiastical Judges' Association donated in 1991. The collection is located in Bays 72 and 73 on the First Floor and includes textbooks, journals, and case transcripts. Some materials are also available online including the Ecclesiastical Law Journal, available through Westlaw and HeinOnline.

Transcripts of the Consistory Courts are indexed and bound annually by the Library, providing an important archive of unreported decisions. Consistory Court transcripts from 2006 onwards are also published through the website of the Ecclesiastical Law Association.

Church Measures are shelved with UK legislation on the Gallery in Bays 162-165 and are also available online via the legislation.gov.uk website.



GALLERY FLOOR

Government Publications

The Library holds a basic collection of both historical and modern government publications. A comprehensive specialist collection is held by Lincoln's Inn Library. Major digests such as Halsbury's Laws and Halsbury's Statutes are found on the gallery floor. The Library also holds Local and Private Acts. There you will also find primary legislation from 1870 onward. Earlier legislation is stored offsite and can be retrieved within 24 hours. Secondary legislation in the form of Statutory Instruments are held from 1890 - 2009. Post-2009 SIs are available online. Please consult the catalogue for details.

Previous Editions

The Library retains previous editions of textbooks in accordance with our collection development policy. Many of these older volumes are available on the Library's gallery level. Some previous editions are stored offsite; these can be requested by members and are usually delivered within 24 hours.



THIRD FLOOR

European Union and Member States Law

As one of its specialist collections, the Library holds an extensive range of EU law. As well as primary European Union material, there are textbooks for individual member states, judgments and decisions of the European Court of Justice, law reports, periodicals and textbooks

United States Collection

The Inn has always had strong connections with the United States, and the Library holds one of the largest US law collections in the United Kingdom. The collection includes the National Reporter series, West's Digest, selected Restatements of the Law volumes, and a comprehensive collection of textbooks. US textbooks are located on the east side of the Third Floor and are classified by subject based on the Moys Classification Scheme, for example, US KN 10 WIL.

Electronic access to US law reports, legislation, journals and reference works are also available in the Library through HeinOnline, Lexis US, LLMC Digital and Westlaw US.

The Third Floor also houses a small capital punishment collection in Bay 297 which consists of books and other media covering current aspects and the history of the death penalty around the world. Items in this collection are available to loan.



Sir Louis Blom-Cooper Floor: Rare Books

The Library holds a significant collection of antiquarian books dating back to the 13th century which is housed with the Archive in secure and environmentally controlled storage. It reflects the Library's original purpose of informing members on diverse subjects including law, theology, travel, medicine and philosophy. Robert Ashley's founding collection of 1641 contains many important works including books from John Donne's library, as well as books owned by John Dee and Ben Johnson. The Library runs a sponsorship scheme for the restoration of rare books; further details are set out on our website.

The Inn's Archive contains administrative and financial records dating back to 1501 as well as manuscript material relating to its history and members. It offers secure viewing areas and also houses a conservation studio. Enquiries should be addressed to the Archivist: archive@middletemple.org.uk.



The Molyneux Globes

The Molyneux Globes are one of the Inn's greatest treasures. They are the earliest globes made in England, and the only known pair in existence. The celestial globe was made in 1592 and the terrestrial one (with the latest discoveries added) in 1603. They are dedicated to Elizabeth I.



The celestial globe being examined by conservator, Sylvia Sumira
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LEGAL RESEARCH

Case Law

The United Kingdom operates under a common law system, in which law is derived both from legislation enacted by Parliament and from judicial decisions in the form of case law.

Subscription services such as Westlaw UK and Lexis+ enable legal researchers to search for judicial precedents and provide valuable editorial content. Status symbols are used to indicate how a case has been treated by subsequent courts, including positive, negative, or mixed consideration (for example, where a case is merely mentioned rather than applied or followed). Each platform provides a key explaining the meaning of these symbols. Researchers can also access commentary resources, including practitioner textbooks and journal articles, as well as links to reported versions, typically in PDF format, for most law report series.

Many judgments are now available online in advance of their publication in a full law report. Although a judgment may be published online, unless and until it appears in a recognised law reporting series, it is technically considered “unreported.” For a case to be reported, it generally needs to establish a precedent by either laying down a new principle or clarifying or changing existing law. Resources for locating transcripts of unreported cases are detailed in the 'official transcript resources' section of this guide.

There are various law report series; however, they are not all equal in authority, and a hierarchy determines which should be cited in court. The Practice Direction on the Citation of Authorities states that where a judgment is reported in the official Law Reports, published by the Incorporated Council of Law Reporting for England and Wales, that report must be cited. This series commenced in 1865 and is currently published in four divisions: Court of Appeal, King’s Bench, Chancery, and Family.

If a case is not reported in the Law Reports, the Weekly Law Reports (also published by the ICLR) and the All England Law Reports (available via Lexis+) are regarded as the next most authoritative sources. Thereafter, reports from specialist series featuring a headnote (case summary) may be cited. Details for deciphering law report citations are indicated on the following pages of this document.

The Library subscribes to additional databases, including i-law, which provide access to further specialist report series. Most authoritative reports and many specialist reports are also available in print in the Library.

Additional Resources Practice Direction: Citation of Authorities, [2012] 1 WLR 780 provides guidance on the citation of authorities.



Citations

Citations are a combination of dates, letters and numbers used to specify a given report. Citations follow a similar pattern.

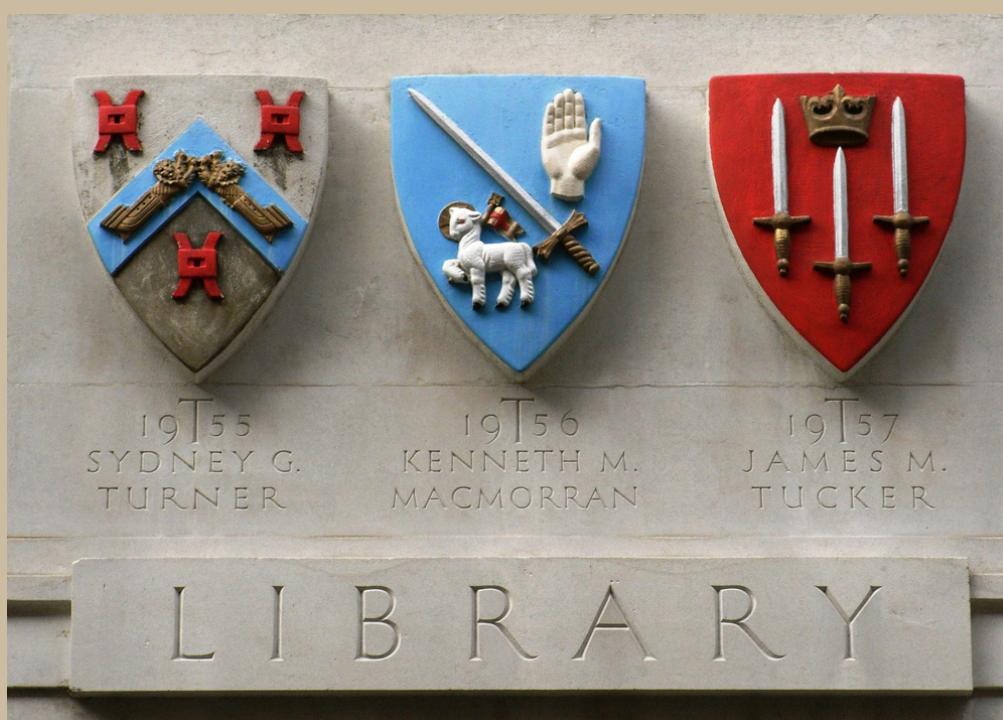
Example:

- Pepper v Hart [1993] AC 593
- Pepper v Hart (1992) 65 TC 421

The year in square brackets [YYYY], indicates the date the case was reported and is essential to locating the report of the case. The year could appear in round brackets (YYYY), referring to when the case was decided rather than published. Some citations include a volume number. Following a volume number, the series abbreviation is provided and finally the starting page number for the report.

Deciphering abbreviations: Cardiff's Index to Legal Abbreviations is freely available online and allows you to search for a series abbreviation.

Raistrick's Index to Legal Citations and Abbreviations is kept at the Library enquiry desk and allows you to search by abbreviation. It's useful for obscure abbreviations or international citations, which might not appear in Cardiff.



Neutral Citations

Neutral citations began in January 2001 to assist in the publication of judgments online. They are assigned by the courts to all cases in the High Court, Court of Appeal, House of Lords, Supreme Court, Privy Council and tribunals. A neutral citation is not a reference to a specific law report; it's pointing to a transcript of a case. If you can only locate a neutral citation it means only a transcript of that case exists.

Official Transcript Resources

BAILII, the British and Irish Legal Information Institute is a free source providing access to official transcripts. Content includes recent British and Irish primary legal materials, as well as decisions from the European Court of Human Rights.

The website for the Courts and Tribunals Judiciary also provides official transcripts from various courts. These are made available by judges, who supply judgments of interest or importance, or which have legal precedents.

The National Archives started maintaining a searchable database of court judgments called Find Case Law in April 2022. The initial collection includes a total of around 50,000 decisions dating back to 2003, from the Supreme Court, Court of Appeal, High Court, and Upper Tribunals. New judgments and decisions ready for publication are sent directly from the courts and tribunals to the National Archives.



Legislation Research

The Library holds copies of primary legislation from 1235 onward, with Local Acts from 1801 onward, and secondary legislation in the form of Statutory Instruments from 1890–2009. The Library still receives loose copies of Acts soon after they are published from The Stationery Office. Public General Acts and General Synod Measures, being Church of England measures, and accompanying explanatory notes, documents that explain the purpose of a Bill, are available in the Library.

Commercial databases, Lexis+ and Westlaw UK, provide up-to-date versions of UK legislation, with incorporating amendments and repeals. Legislation.gov.uk is a free resource, which includes full text of Acts in force from January 1988 and all published subsequently—just take note on Legislation.gov.uk of the “Changes to Legislation” notice to ensure you are using the most up-to-date version of the act.

Halsbury’s Statutes is the only print resource that incorporates repeals and amendments. Halsbury’s Statutes provides up-to-date versions of all Public General Acts in force in England and Wales. There are 52 main volumes updated regularly, providing amended versions of statutes and related information including judicial interpretation and subordinate legislation. Consolidated indices allow users to search primary legislation alphabetically, chronologically and by subject. A cumulative supplement and noter-up service are provided to check for any changes.



Current Law Statutes Annotated, includes the text of the legislation soon after it receives Royal Assent. This resource goes back to 1947 and provides commentary in footnotes surrounding each act. It includes references to parliamentary debates and lists cases that may have led to that particular piece of legislation.

Specialist loose-leaf encyclopaedias cover many individual subjects and include up to date statute law. They are edited by specialists in their fields, and usually contain discussion of the legislation and references to cases decided under it. In addition, they often contain the texts of relevant delegated legislation, departmental circulars and other policy documents.

Additional Resources



Guides to specific resources may be shelved with the item, and a selection of research guides produced by library staff are available on the first floor. A range of reference books for further detail is available at the Enquiry Area.

Detailed information about legal research techniques can be found in:

- Legal Research: A Practitioner's Handbook by Emily Allbon, 3rd ed., 2019
- Glanville Williams: Learning the Law, 17th ed. by ATH Smith, 2025.

European and EU Research

EU legislation can be found in the Official Journal, accessible freely via EUR-Lex, and contains all legal acts. It is the official gazette of the record for the EU and is published in all official EU languages. Since 2013, the online version of the OJ is the official, authenticated version.

Decisions of the European Court of Justice and the General Court are reported in the European Court Reports, accessible freely via Curia and EUR-Lex. Since 2012, the online version of the European Court Reports is the official authenticated version. The Library provides print access to the European Court Reports from 1954 to 2011 (Bay 200–201, 212–213).

Some European cases are reported in the Common Market Law Reports (Bay 214, 222–3) and the All England Law Reports (Bay 26–7), available online and in hardcopy.

The Library also holds some law reports that focus on cases from particular EU member states, such as the Irish Reports (Bay 289, 304–5), available online and in print.

For further guidance on EU legal research, please refer to the EU Collection Library guide.



United States Research

State and federal legislation, case law and supplementary material, including annotated versions of the US Code and uniform laws, are available in the Library through Lexis US, HeinOnline, Westlaw US, and LLMC Digital. Law reports are available in print, including the United States Reports (1759–1972) and National Reporter series (1878–2010).

Free Online Resources for US Law

- **Bills and Resolutions:** Congress.gov (1989–), Government Publishing Office (1993–).
- **Public/Private Laws (slip laws):** Congress.gov (1951–).
- **Statutes at Large (session laws):** Congress.gov (1951–), Government Publishing Office (1951–), Law Library of Congress (1789–1950).
- **United States Code (USC):** Government Publishing Office (1994–), Law Library of Congress (1925–1994).
- **State legislation:** See Congress.gov to locate state legislature websites.
- **Case law (state and federal):** Caselaw Access Project, CourtListener, Google Scholar.

US Citations

US law report citations usually include a volume number, report abbreviation, and page number followed by the date in round brackets, e.g. 372 US 335 (1963). The Bluebook and Prince's Dictionary of Legal Abbreviations are also available from the Enquiry Desk for guidance on US legal citations.

For further guidance on US legal research, please refer to the United States Collection Library guide.

INNS' SUBJECT SPECIALISATIONS

Gray's Inn

Air and Space Law
Conflict of Laws
Constitutional & Administrative
Construction Law
Consumer Law
Data Protection
Education
Energy Law
Entertainment & Media Law
Environmental Law
Foreign Law
Highways
Housing Law
Human Rights
Immigration & Nationality
Information Technology
International Law
Local Government
Northern Ireland
Planning Law
Rates & Council Tax
Social Security & Welfare Law
Sports Law
Telecommunications

Inner Temple

Armed Forces
Commonwealth
Coroners
Criminal Law
Criminology
Customs & Excise
Defamation
Family Law
Food & Drugs
Forensic
Science & Medicine
Intellectual Property
Licensing
Medical Law
Mental Health
Personal Injury
Police
Prison Law
Product Liability
Professional Negligence
Road Traffic
Scotland
Sentencing

Lincoln's Inn

Agriculture
Animal Law
Channel Islands
Charities
Commonwealth
Company Law
Equity and Trusts
Insolvency
Isle of Man
Landlord & Tenant
Parliamentary Materials
Partnership Law
Pensions
Real Property
Taxation
Wills and Probate

Middle Temple

Accountancy
Agency
Arbitration
Banking
Carriage of Goods
Commercial Law
Competition Law
Ecclesiastical Law
Employment
Equal Opportunities
EU & Member States
Finance & Financial Services
Health & Safety
Insurance Law
International Trade
Ireland
Maritime & Shipping Law
Transport
United States





ROBERTUS ASCHLEY, A. 1641:
HUIUS BIBLIOTHECA FUNDATOR.
-- AD. 1641 --