How to Cite Legal Materials

Follow the Bluebook style, as closely as you can. Below are examples based on the 18th edition of the Bluebook. For more help and explanations, consult the latest edition of The Bluebook: A uniform system of citation, kept at the Reference Desk [KF 245. B88], or ask your professor.

For an APA style reference list, treat legal citations as works with no authors. Order them alphabetically according to the first significant word or abbreviation in the entry.

► COURT CASES

Example 1. Text citation The Supreme Court first applied the exclusionary rule to a state case in Mapp v. Ohio.

Reference list entry Mapp v. Ohio, 367 U.S. 643 (1961)
That is, the case was published in volume 367 of the U.S. reporter, starting on page 643.
If you are citing a particular page of a case, give the page number, e.g. to indicate page 670 of this case:


Example 2. Text citation As federal Judge Bue asserted in Sierra Club v. Froehlke (1987),

Reference list entry Sierra Club v. Froehlke, 816 F.2d 205 (5th Cir. 1987)

Example 3. Text citation The Supreme Court recognized in Durflinger v. Artilles (1981/1984) a duty of care to protect third parties from the dangers presented by an involuntary mental patient in state custody.


Example 4. Reference list entry for an international law case available on the internet

► STATUTES

In your text, give the popular or official name of the act and the year it was passed. Each word of the statute is capitalized but not italicized.

Text citation To prevent people with disabilities from being discriminated against in the workplace, Congress passed the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.


► CONSTITUTIONS

E.g. for section 2 of the 14th amendment to the U.S. constitution: U.S. Const. amend. XIV, § 2.
E.g. for section 12 of article 1 of a state constitution: S.C. Const. art. 1, § 12.
TESTIMONY AND HEARINGS

Text citation
One of the most constructive steps that Washington could take to help families (Urban America’s Need, 1992) would be to …

Reference list entry

BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

The number of a bill or resolution should be preceded by H.R. (House of Representatives) or S. (Senate).

Text citations
Senate Bill 5936 (1992) might be the most important for providing funding to assist low-income housing.
One of the bills (S. 5936, 1992) would provide desperately needed operating funding to support low-income housing.

Reference list entry
S. 5936, 102d Cong. § 4 (1992)

EXECUTIVE ORDER

Text citation
Under the authority of Executive Order 11609 (1994), the information should be provided...

Reference list entry

FEDERAL REGULATION

Text citation
This provision of FTC Credit Practices Rule (1999) affects only …

Reference list entry
FTC Credit Practices Rule, 16 C.F.R. § 444 (1999)

LAW REVIEW ARTICLE (note: Bluebook style differs from APA style)


TREATIES

Between 3 or fewer countries

Multilateral

DOCUMENTS ON THE INTERNET

Cite as usual, followed by the URL if the item is only available on the internet:

Citation to a slip opinion available on the internet

Put “available at” in italics before the URL if the document is in print, but a parallel citation to an online source would improve access for your reader:

[ES 8/2010. based on MK 2002]