FACTSHEET

Referencing: Law Resources
HARVARD System

This factsheet provides guidance on citing legal resources using HARVARD.
The Law School recommends the OSCOLA System - Law School students SHOULD NOT USE this factsheet.
If you are studying law as part of another course, check with your lecturer which system they require.
For further HARVARD guidance, view the Referencing: the Harvard Way factsheet or Referencing tutorial on SOL.

The reasons for citing a source are to enable someone reading your work to find a document you have mentioned and to avoid allegations of plagiarism by attributing work correctly. There are two parts to citing references: including details in the text when you are referring to another person’s ideas; and listing the details of all these references at the end.

In-text citations

For general sources, include (Author date) in your text. Cases and legislation are different:

Cases

The first time that you cite a case, refer to it in full with the Party Names and law report citation:

Example: Central London Property Trust Ltd v High Trees House Ltd [1947] KB 130

Unless it would not be clear to which case you are referring, you can generally refer to the case subsequently by the first party names only. If you are referring to a specific page or paragraph then include these after the reference:

Example: Pepper (Inspector of Taxes) v Hart [1993] AC 593, 594
Pepper (Inspector of Taxes) v Hart [1993] AC 593 at 594

If you are quoting directly from a judgment put the quote in “ ”. You can shorten the quote using pauses ...

Example: This point was reinforced in the judgment of Diplock LJ in Hong Kong Fir Shipping Co Ltd v Kawasaki Kisen Kaisha Ltd [1962] 2 QB 26, 70 when he said “There are many... contractual undertakings... which cannot be categorised as being ‘conditions’.”

Cases in textbooks - it is always best to refer to a law report, but if you only want to refer to a case in a textbook, you must treat this as a secondary reference. The book (e.g. Murphy) would then be cited as normal in your reference list:

Example: Smith v Jones [2001] EWCA 1425 (cited in Murphy 2007, p.4) implies that

Legislation

Include the name and date of the piece of legislation in italics. For Statutory Instruments, additionally include (SI number). After the first mention, you can refer to Acts/SIs by short title and year. When referring to parts of legislation, Acts have sections (s. or ss.), parts (pt), schedules (sch) and paragraphs (para); Statutory Instruments have articles (art.) rules (r. or rr) or regulations (reg or regs) and then paragraphs and sub paragraphs:

Example: Environment Act 1995
Insolvency Rules 1986 (SI 1986/925)
Environment Act 1995, ss.5-11, 14(1)(b)
References at the end of your text

Cases

A law report citation typically includes the below. If you are not sure of the abbreviation, you can usually find the citation at the start of the case, the top of the page or within LexisLibrary or Westlaw:

Party Names [Year of publication] Volume number (if available) Law Report Abbreviation Start page

Example: Macfarlane v EE Caledonia Ltd [1994] 2 All ER 1

Neutral citations - many cases from 2001 onwards have neutral citations. This includes the year of the judgment, the Court abbreviation (e.g. UKHL=UK House of Lords, EWCA=England and Wales Court of Appeal etc.) and the case number. This should be included before a law report citation, or if a case is unreported:

Example: R v Rezvi [2002] UKHL 1, [2002] 1 All ER 815

European Union Cases - include Case number Party Names [Year] Law report abbreviation Volume number - Start page

Example: Case C-286/88 Falciola v Comune di Pavia [1990] ECR 1-191

Legislation

- Acts are also known as Statutes. The title and date are always included. Each Act has a chapter number which you can additionally include, along with publisher information if required.
- Statutory Instruments are also known as Orders, Rules and Regulations. Cite the title and year and SI number.
- Bills are proposals for legislation heard in both the House of Commons and House of Lords. Include the Short title (Parliamentary session) Serial number. The serial number changes every time the Bill is reprinted. Include [ ] for House of Commons bill numbers.

SI Example: Insolvency Rules 1986 (SI 1986/925)
Bill Examples: Health and Safety at Work (Offences Bill) HC Bill (2002-03) [38] Harbours Bill HL Bill (2002-03) 24

European Union legislation is cited as follows:

- Regulations: Institutional Origin (Institutional Treaty) Number/year Date it was passed Title

- Commission Documents (Com Docs): Title, COM (Last two digits of year) Serial number, draft or final

- Directives and Decisions: Institutional origin Form Year/Legislation Number/ Institutional Treaty Date passed Title


Government publications

A reference to a Command Paper is cited:

AUTHOR(s), Year of publication. Title (Command paper number). Place of publication: Publisher


A reference to Hansard is cited as follows (HL = House of Lords, HC = House of Commons):

House abbreviation Deb (Parliamentary Session) Volume number col. column number

Example: HC Deb (2001-02) 391 col. 982 or HL Deb (2005-06) 685 col. 767

Legal Journals

These are usually cited like any other journal but some established law journals are cited like a law report and have an abbreviation. Most journals give this either on the cover or at the start of the article. Cite as follows:

AUTHOR, Year of publication. Title of article. [Date] volume number abbreviated title of journal Page number