

SECONDARY SOURCES

Resources about the Law

Secondary sources are materials that explain, interpret, and analyze the law. They are not the laws themselves. Secondary sources are an essential research tool, because they explain basic concepts of an issue, provide procedural information, and typically cite the primary law on the topic. Secondary sources encompass a variety of types of resources, ranging from brief encyclopedia entries to detailed multi-volume treatises on a narrow topic. Most research projects will involve consulting a variety of secondary sources.

Related Guides:

[California Practice Guides](#)

[West Digests](#)

[California Primary Law](#)

[Federal Primary Law](#)

1. LEGAL ENCYCLOPEDIAS

Legal encyclopedias are multi-volume works that contain discussions of many different topics of law. They cover state and federal law generally, with an emphasis on citations to case law rather than statutes. Legal encyclopedias are an excellent way to get a broad grasp of a particular topic, to narrow your focus of inquiry, and to locate additional sources on a topic. Like any encyclopedia, legal encyclopedias are arranged alphabetically by subject and have general indexes for the whole set and topical indexes for individual articles.

American Jurisprudence (Am Jur) 2d [KF 154 .A42](#) (Ready Reference)

Electronic Access: On the Law Library's computers, using *WestlawNext*.

California Jurisprudence (Cal Jur) 3d [KFC 80 .C35](#) (Ready Reference)

Electronic Access: On the Law Library's computers, using *WestlawNext*.

Corpus Juris Secundum (CJS)

Electronic Access Only: On the Law Library's computers, using *WestlawNext*.

West's Encyclopedia of American Law [KF 154 .W47](#) (Self Help)

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2. PRACTICE-ORIENTED ENCYCLOPEDIAS

Like general legal encyclopedias, practice-oriented encyclopedias contain discussions of many different case types. For each entry, a practice-oriented encyclopedia will provide an overview of the law, but the focus is on the practical aspects of preparing and trying a case on the topic. For each topic, a practice-oriented encyclopedia provides tips such as the necessary elements of a cause of action; how to prove facts necessary to win a case; and legal strategies and techniques particularly useful for the case type. Popular practice-oriented encyclopedias include:

American Jurisprudence Proof of Facts 2d & American Jurisprudence Proof of Facts 3d [KF 8935 .A52](#) (Compact)

Electronic Access: On the Law Library's computers, using *WestlawNext*.

American Jurisprudence Trials [KF 8915 .A44](#) (Compact)

Electronic Access: On the Law Library's computers, using *WestlawNext*.

Causes of Action & Causes of Action 2d [KF 8863 .S53](#) (Compact)

Electronic Access: On the Law Library's computers, using *WestlawNext*.

3. TREATISES

Written by experts, treatises are resources that provide highly organized, comprehensive coverage of a specific area of law. Treatises are a great source for finding detailed discussions of legal topics. Unlike practice guides, the focus of most treatises tends to be on explanation, interpretation and analysis of the law, rather than on practical tips and techniques. For more information on California practice guides in the Law Library's collection, see our Guide on [California Practice Guides](#).

Popular treatises in the Law Library's collection include:

Collier on Bankruptcy [KF 1524 .C6](#)

Corbin on Contracts [KF 801 .C672](#)

Federal Procedure, Lawyers Edition [KF 8835 .F4](#)

Nimmer on Copyright [KF 2991 .5 .N5](#)

Williston on Contracts [KF 801 .W53](#)

Electronic Access: On the Law Library's computers, using *WestlawNext*.

Witkin's Summary of California Law [KFC 80 .W57](#) (Ready Reference)

Electronic Access: On the Law Library's computers, using *WestlawNext*.

Witkin's California Criminal Law [KFC 1100 .W4 C34](#) (Ready Reference)

Electronic Access: On the Law Library's computers, using *WestlawNext*.

Witkin's California Evidence [KFC 1030 .W57](#) (Ready Reference)

Electronic Access: On the Law Library's computers, using *WestlawNext*.

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Witkin's California Procedure [KFC 995 .W58](#) (Ready Reference)

Electronic Access: On the Law Library's computers, using *WestlawNext*.

To find other treatises in the Law Library's collection, search our online catalog for free from your home or office at scllhip.saclaw.lib.ca.us. Once in the Online Catalog, enter keywords in the General or Title Keyword fields. If you know the Subject for the topics or titles you're interested in, select "Subject Keyword" from the search field drop down menu and type those terms in the search field.

You may also simultaneously search our collection and those of many other libraries worldwide for free from your home or office using WorldCat Discovery at scpll.on.worldcat.org/discovery.

4. LAW REVIEWS AND LEGAL PERIODICALS

Legal periodicals are periodicals specifically on legal topics. Many are published by professional organizations, like the American Bar Association. Law reviews are published by law schools. Other than one or two lead articles, most articles are written by law students. The lead article in an issue is typically written by a law professor or other expert in the legal field. Law review articles are very well-researched, and contain detailed footnotes to cases and codes. Law reviews and legal periodicals are a great starting point for many research projects, because these articles are on very narrow topics, and include citations to a variety of primary and secondary sources. The Law Library collects very few law reviews or legal periodicals in print, but offers access to a wide variety of these titles electronically.

HeinOnline

HeinOnline includes current and historical law review articles from nearly all law reviews published nationwide. All documents are scanned from the original print source, so layout and formatting appear as originally intended. Documents can be downloaded as PDFs.

Electronic Access: On the Law Library's computers, using *HeinOnline*.

Westlaw

Westlaw provides access to a variety of state and national law reviews and periodicals. Coverage varies by publication, but most include articles back to the mid-1980s.

Electronic Access: On the Law Library's computers, using *WestlawNext*.

Lexis Advance

Coverage varies by publication, but most include articles back to the mid-1980s.

Electronic Access: On the Law Library's computers, using *LEXIS Advance*.

Google Scholar

Google Scholar allows users to search "scholarly works" such as peer-reviewed papers, theses, professional journals, abstracts, and technical reports. When articles are available for free online, Google Scholar links users to the article.

Electronic Access: via the Internet at www.scholar.google.com.

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5. AMERICAN LAW REPORTS (ALRS)

ALRs contain in-depth articles, called annotations, on narrow topics of the law. These annotations discuss a narrow legal topic in detail, provide background on and analysis of the issue, and include extensive citations to relevant cases, statutes, law review articles, and other relevant sources.

ALRs are organized into two parts: ALR Federal (1st-3rd series), and ALR (1st-7th series). ALR Federal covers only federal laws, while ALR includes topics that are affected by state law, or a combination of state and federal law. Annotations are national in scope, citing sources from across jurisdictions. A Table of Jurisdictions in each annotation helps researchers find relevant citations for their jurisdiction.

American Law Reports: Annotated [KF 132 .A544](#) - **American Law Reports 7th: Cases and Annotations** [KF 132 .A57](#) (Compact)

Electronic Access (all series): On the Law Library's computers, using *WestlawNext*.

American Law Reports Federal: Cases and Annotations [KF 132 .A47](#) (Compact) - **American Law Reports Federal 3d: Cases and Annotations** [KF 132 .A472](#) (Compact)

Electronic Access (all series): On the Law Library's computers, using *WestlawNext*.

6. RESTATEMENTS AND PRINCIPLES OF LAW

Restatements of the Law

Restatements of the law are produced by the American Law Institute (ALI), an organization comprised of prominent American judges, lawyers, and law professors. Each restatement distills the case law on a particular topic into a series of concise principles or rules. Although the restatements do not have binding legal authority, they are considered persuasive authority and are frequently cited by the courts. Restatements cover very specific topics; titles include:

- Agency
- Business Associations
- Charitable Nonprofit Organizations
- Concise Restatement of Torts
- Concise Restatement of the Law Governing Lawyers
- Concise Restatement of Property
- Conflict of Laws
- Consumer Contracts
- Contracts
- Employment Law
- Foreign Relations Law of The United States: Jurisdiction
- Foreign Relations Law of The United States: Sovereign Immunity
- Foreign Relations Law of The United States: Treaties
- Judgments
- The Law of American Indians

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- The Law Governing Lawyers
- Liability Insurance
- Property
- Property: Future Interests
- Property: Donative Transfers
- Property: Joint Ownership
- Property: Landlord and Tenant
- Property: Mortgages
- Property: Sales of Land
- Property: Servitudes
- Property: Wills and Other Donative Transfers
- Restatement In The Courts
- Restitution
- Restitution and Unjust Enrichment
- Security
- Suretyship and Guaranty
- Torts
- Torts: Apportionment of Liability
- Torts: Economic Torts & Related Wrongs
- Torts: Intentional Torts to Persons
- Torts: Products Liability
- Torts: Liability for Economic Harm
- Torts: Liability For Physical and Emotional Harm
- Trusts
- Trusts: Prudent Investor Rule
- Unfair Competition
- The U.S. Law of International Commercial Arbitration

Electronic Access Only: On the Law Library's computers, using *HeinOnline*.

Principles of the Law

Just as the *Restatements of the Law's* clear formulations of the common law and its statutory elements or variations reflect the law as it presently stands or might plausibly be stated by a court, the ALI's *Principles of the Law* analyze legal areas thought to be in need of reform. *Principles of the Law* aim to express the law as it should be. Like the *Restatements*, *Principles of the Law* use the familiar black-letter statements of recommended legal rules, supported by Comments, Illustrations, and Reporter's Notes. Titles available on *HeinOnline* include:

- Principles of the Law of Aggregate Litigation
- Principles of Corporate Governance: Analysis and Recommendations
- Principles of the Law, Election Administration: Non-Precinct Voting and Resolution of Ballot-Counting Disputes
- Principles of the Law of Family Dissolution: Analysis and Recommendations

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- Principles of Government Ethics
- Principles of the Law Intellectual Property: Principles Governing Jurisdiction, Choice of Law, and Judgments in Transnational Disputes
- Principles of the Law of Software Contracts
- Principles of the Law Transnational Civil Procedure
- Principles of the Law Transnational Insolvency

Electronic Access Only: On the Law Library's computers, using *HeinOnline*.

7. FORM BOOKS

Form books are resources that contain forms and sample legal documents for a variety of legal topics. Form books are an excellent aid for those drafting legal documents. The forms and samples will provide standard language that can be tailored specifically to the court or situation in which it will be used.

General form books are typically arranged as encyclopedias, with an alphabetical arrangement of topics and/or forms. Most form books offer brief explanations and procedural information about the proceedings associated with the form. Detailed procedural information and less-common forms are more likely found in a practice guide on the topic. For more information on California practice guides in the Law Library's collection, see our Guide on [California Practice Guides](#).

Among the most popular form books in the Law Library's collection are:

American Jurisprudence Legal Forms [KF 170 .A542](#) (Ready Reference)

Electronic Access: On the Law Library's computers, using *WestlawNext*.

American Jurisprudence Pleading and Practice Forms Annotated [KF 8836 .A45](#) (Ready Reference)

Electronic Access: On the Law Library's computers, using *WestlawNext*.

California Forms of Pleading and Practice Annotated [KFC 1010 .A65 C3](#) (Ready Reference)

Electronic Access: On the Law Library's computers, using *LEXIS Advance*.

Electronic Access: On the Law Library's computers, using the *Matthew Bender CD*.

California Judicial Council Forms

Electronic Access Only: via the Internet at www.courts.ca.gov/forms.htm.

California Legal Forms Transaction Guide [KFC 68 .C32](#) (Ready Reference)

Electronic Access: On the Law Library's computers, using *LEXIS Advance*.

West's California Code Forms with Practice Commentaries [KFC 30 .W482](#)

Electronic Access: On the Law Library's computers, using *WestlawNext*.

West's California Judicial Council Forms [KFC 995 .W45 C3](#) (Reference)

Electronic Access: On the Law Library's computers, using *WestlawNext*.

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West's Legal Forms

Electronic Access Only: On the Law Library's computers, using *WestlawNext*.

8. LOOSE-LEAF SERVICES

Loose-leaf services are topical reporters that provide comprehensive up-to-date coverage of a particular area of law. They compile and consolidate into one source all relevant primary authority on a specific topic, including statutes, regulations, case law, and administrative decisions, as well as proposed legislation and pending agency decisions. Loose-leaves also contain commentary and analysis which help the user understand the primary materials. In addition, the indexing used in Loose-leaf services is much more specific than that found in digests and encyclopedias, making them especially valuable to practitioners and scholars. Loose-leaf services are timely. Materials are typically updated on a weekly or bi-weekly basis and are then filed into a notebook or binder. Because the Loose-leaf format allows the publisher to continuously update the materials, Loose-leaf services are generally more current than other sources.

Loose-leaves are widely considered the best place to begin research in subjects governed by administrative regulations and decisions. Questions in areas such as labor law, environmental law, securities, banking, and taxation, for example, are likely to be answered more promptly, accurately and conveniently in a Loose-leaf service than elsewhere.

Loose-leaf services vary widely in format and organization. Each Loose-leaf service usually has a set of instructions at the beginning of the first volume, entitled "Overview" or "How to Use this Reporter." These instructions explain how the particular Loose-leaf service is organized.

Some of the most popular Loose-leaf services in the Law Library's collection include:

California Tax Reports [KFC 860 .A6C3](#)

Immigration Law and Procedure [KF 4819 .G61](#)

CCH's Standard Federal Tax Reports [KF 6280 .C6 C4](#)

West's Social Security Reporting Service [KF 3641.5 .A1 S6](#) (Compact)

IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS GUIDE, OR IF YOU NEED HELP FINDING OR USING THE MATERIALS LISTED, DON'T HESITATE TO ASK A REFERENCE LIBRARIAN.