



2020

How To Read A Legal Citation

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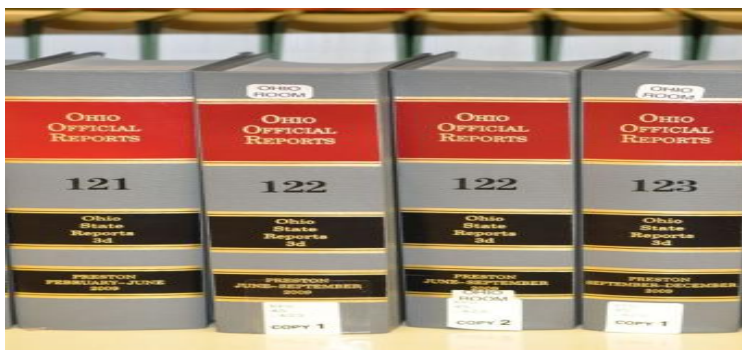
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Home

Case Citation, Generally

General format: *Seasons Coal Co. v. Cleveland*, 10 Ohio St. 3d 77(1984)



Case name	Volume No.	Reporter*	Page No.	Year
Seasons Coal Co. v. Cleveland,	10	Ohio St.3d	77	(1984)

*The title of the set of books containing the case. See Federal and State cases tabs in this guide for more reporter abbreviations.

More Information

- Writing Manual: A Guide to Citations, Style and Judicial Opinion Writing The Supreme Court of Ohio
- Basic Legal Citation via LII (Legal Information Institute)
- Cardiff Legal Abbreviations
- Bluebook Guide Suffolk University Law School.

Reading a Citation



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Federal Case Citations

U.S. Supreme Court Example

Whetsel v. Sherwood, 537 U.S. 1182, 123 S.Ct. 1208, 154 L.Ed. 1013, 2003 WL 329302, 2003 U.S. LEXIS 1072, 71 U.S.L.W. (2003).

Case Name: Whetsel v. Sherwood.

Official Reporter Citations: The first number is the volume number, followed by the reporter abbreviation, followed by the page number. (537 U.S. 1182, 123 S.Ct. 1208, 154 L.Ed. 1013)

Parallel Citations: These parallel citations contain the same text of the opinion, but they are printed in reporters published by other companies, posted on the web or in LexisNexis or Westlaw. "WL" stands for WESTLAW and "U.S. LEXIS" stands for United States Supreme Court material within LexisNexis. These parallel citations are often available before the official reporter. (2003 WL 329302, 2003 U.S. LEXIS 1072, 71 U.S.L.W. (2003))

Year: The year the opinion was written.



Bluebook Tip

Table T1.1 "Federal Judicial and Legislative Materials" in The Bluebook (19th edition) provides a complete list of federal reporter names and abbreviations.

Search the Library Catalog

Title Author Keyword
 Subject Call Number

Common Reporters for Federal Cases

Decisions of Federal Courts

REPORTER NAME	ABBREVIATION
United States Reports	U.S.
Supreme Court Reporter	S.Ct.
United States Supreme Court Reports, Lawyer's Edition	L.Ed.
United States Supreme Court Reports, Lawyer's Edition, Second Series	L.Ed. 2d
United States Law Week	U.S.L.W.
Federal Reporter	F.
Federal Reporter, Second Series	F.2d
Federal Reporter, Third Series	F.3d
Federal Appendix	F. App'x
Federal Supplement	F. Supp.
Federal Supplement 2d	F. Supp. 2d
Federal Supplement 3d	F. Supp. 3d
Federal Rules Decisions	F.R.D.
Federal Bankruptcy Reporter	B.R.

State Case Citations

State Citation Example

State ex rel Walls v. Ohio Masonic Home, 98 Ohio

St. 3d 285, 2003-Ohio-370, 782 N.E.2d 581, 2003 Ohio LEXIS 151 (2003).

This example shows an Ohio Supreme Court case citation.

Case Name: State ex rel Walls v. Ohio Masonic Home.

Official Reporter Citation: 98 Ohio St. 3d 285, Volume number, reporter abbreviation, and beginning page number of this decision.

Ohio WebCite: 2003-Ohio-370. The electronic citation found on the Ohio Supreme Court's Reporter of Decisions webpage. See Supreme Court of Ohio Writing Manual (effective Jan. 1, 2012), p. 18, 26 et seq.

Parallel Citations: The parallel citations contain the same text of the opinion, but they are printed in reporters published by other companies or posted on the web or within one of the major legal databases. In this example, there is no "WL" as the opinion of the court has been published in the print regional North Eastern reporter, 2nd Series (2d). Ohio LEXIS stands for Ohio Supreme Court material within LexisNexis. These parallel citations are often available before the official reporter.

Year: The year the opinion was written.

Common State Reporters

<i>REPORTER NAME</i>	<i>ABBREVIATION</i>
Atlantic Reporter	A.
Atlantic Reporter, Second Series	A.2d
Atlantic Reporter, Third Series	A.3d
California Reporter	Cal. Rptr.
California Reporter, Second Series	Cal. Rptr.2d
California Reporter, Third Series	Cal. Rptr.3d
North Eastern Reporter	N.E.
North Eastern Reporter, Second Series	N.E.2d
North Eastern Reporter, Third Series	N.E. 3d
North Western Reporter	N.W.
North Western Reporter, Second Series	N.W.2d
New York Supplement	N.Y.S.
New York Supplement, Second Series	N.Y.S.2d
Pacific Reporter	P.
Pacific Reporter, Second Series	P.2d
Pacific Reporter, Third Series	P.3d
Southern Reporter	So.
Southern Reporter, Second Series	So. 2d
Southern Reporter, Third Series	So. 3d
South Eastern Reporter	S.E.
South Eastern Reporter, Second Series	S.E.2d
South Eastern Reporter, Third Series	S.E.3d
South Western Reporter	S.W.
South Western Reporter, Second Series	S.W.2d
South Western Reporter, Third Series	S.W.3d

Bluebook Tip

Table T1.3 States -- Ohio in The Bluebook (20th edition) provides you with more information on Ohio citations and reporters.

Ohio Reporters

<i>OHIO REPORTER NAME</i>	<i>ABBREVIATION</i>
Ohio State Reports	Ohio St.
Ohio State Reports, Second Series	Ohio St. 2d
Ohio State Reports, Third Series*	Ohio St. 3d
Ohio Appellate Reports	Ohio App.
Ohio Appellate Reports, Second Series	Ohio App. 2d
Ohio Appellate Reports, Third Series*	Ohio App. 3d
Ohio Miscellaneous	Ohio Misc.
Ohio Miscellaneous, Second Series*	Ohio Misc. 2d
Ohio Bar Reports	Ohio B.
Ohio Opinions	Ohio Op.
Ohio Opinions, Second Series	Ohio Op. 2d
Ohio Opinions, Third Series	Ohio Op. 3d
Ohio Nisi Prius Reports	Ohio N.P.
Ohio Nisi Prius Reports, New Series	Ohio N.P. (n.s.)
Ohio Decisions	Ohio Dec.
Ohio Decisions, Reprint	Ohio Dec. Reprint
Ohio Circuit Court Decisions	Ohio C.C. Dec.
Ohio Circuit Reports (Jahn)	Ohio C.C.
Ohio Circuit Decisions	Ohio Cir. Dec.
Ohio Circuit Court Reports, New Series	Ohio C.C. (n.s.)
Unreported Ohio Appellate Cases	Ohio App. Unrep.

* The title on the physical volumes is Ohio Official Reports: Cases Argued

Ohio Official Reports: Cases Argued and Determined in the Courts of Ohio.

Beginning on May 1, 2002, the Supreme Court's website became the repository of all opinions of the Supreme Court, the courts of appeals, and the Court of Claims, as well as selected opinions of the state's other trial courts. Since that time, each opinion posted to the Supreme Court's website has been assigned its own unique number or "WebCite." The WebCite is composed of three elements: the year of decision, the word "Ohio," and a number unique to that opinion, e.g., 2003-Ohio-1234.

Statute Citations

Statute Citation Example

Example: **Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990** (The popular name of an act)

United States Code: Topical arrangement of United States statutes:

42 U.S.C.A. §12101 (West 2005)

42 U.S.C.S. §12101 (LexisNexis 2003)

Title Number - Name of Code - Code section - Publisher - Date of volume or supplement.

If the cite is just to U.S.C., this means the official edition of the United States Code, published by the Government Printing Office.

Public Laws: When a law is passed, it is called a public law or slip law. The citation indicates the Congress number and the Public Law number:

P.L. 101-336

Statutes at Large: The Statutes at Large contains the public laws in chronological order, with margin notations indicating where parts of the public law will appear in the U.S. Code.

103 Stat. 327

(Volume Number, Abbreviation for the Statutes at Large, Page Number).

Bluebook Tip

You can find additional information on statute citations in section **R12 - Statutes** of The Bluebook (19th ed.).

Search the Library Catalog

Scholar

Title