

# Finding Federal and State Cases

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Court opinions, or cases, are published in books called reporters. Reporters are sets of books collecting cases in chronological order.

## 1. Official and Unofficial Reporters

- A. Reporters include official and unofficial versions.
- B. The text of the opinion in official and unofficial reporters is identical.
- C. Unofficial reporters include editorial additions to aid in research.
- D. Official versions must be used for citations in court documents.

## 2. Jurisdiction Coverage

- A. Some reporters limit opinions to a single jurisdiction or court.
- B. Some reporters collect cases from multiple jurisdictions.

## 3 Examples

- 1. Single jurisdiction: \_\_\_\_\_ publishes cases from the Court of Appeals and Supreme Court in Idaho    C.
- 2. Multiple jurisdictions: the \_\_\_\_\_ provides state cases from Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Kansas, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Oregon, Utah, Washington & Wyoming.

1. Three reporters each publish all United States Supreme Court decisions:

A. ( )

B. ( )

C. 8 Q L W H G 6 W D W H V 6 X S U H P H & R X U W 5 H S R U W V / D Z \ H U V .

2. Official Reporter

A. United State Reports ( )



table below lists the abbreviations of the regional reporters and the states covered in each set:

|                |                                                                         |
|----------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| P., P.2d, P.3d | Pacific (AK, AZ, CA, CO, HI, ID, KS, MT, NV, NM,<br>OK, OR, UT, WA, WY) |
| S.W., S.W.2d   | South Western (AR, KY, MO, TN, TX)                                      |

- b. separate series for each 5 years from 1976.
- 3. General Digests update the most recent Decennial Digests.
- 3. Federal Digests
  - A. Covers all reported federal cases.
  - B. Includes:
    - 1. Federal Digest (1754 –1938)
    - 2. Modern Federal Practice Digest (1939-1960)
    - 3. Federal Practice Digest 2d (1961-1975)
    - 4. Federal Practice Digest 3d (1976-1989)
    - 5. Federal Practice Digest 4<sup>th</sup> (1990-present)
- 4. U.S. Supreme Court Reports Digest
  - Covers U.S. Supreme Court cases     C
- 5.                               covers federal bankruptcy cases     C
- 2. Electronic Searching
  - A. Westlaw and Lexis (password only)
  - B. LexisNexis Academic (public access)
    - 1. Search by keyword, citation, party name.
    - 2. Narrow search by fields i.e. dates, Boolean operators, etc.

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The official Supreme Court website with decisions from the U.S. Reports from 1991, volume 502, to current.

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Fee-based Internet service for obtaining records for federal appellate, bankruptcy and district courts case 0 0 pB2 276.05