

American Law Reports (A.L.R.)

What is A.L.R.? American Law Reports (A.L.R.) is a secondary resource that:

- Discusses legal topics with summaries & citations of all cases on point.
- Is published in six series or sets of state law and one set of federal law.
- Indicates which cases are controlling and on point.
- Discusses, thoroughly, unsettled areas of law, e.g., splits in federal circuits.
- Organizes cases by jurisdiction, legal rule or outcome.
- Lists resources for continuing research, including statutes and regulations.
- Cross-references cases to the West Topic and Key Number system (for recent years).
- Has a digest helpful for locating topics and issues, as well as annotations.
- Is online in both Lexis and Westlaw.
- In print, updates cases in pocket parts and supplements.

CAVEAT: A.L.R. annotations are seldom cited in briefs and cases. Courts prefer citations to primary law, e.g., cases, statutes, regulations, and constitutions.

How to Use A.L.R. in print:

- **Look up your topic in an index at the end of a series or set.**
 - The *Quick Index* is helpful but not complete.
 - Use the digests for *A.L.R.* and *A.L.R.2d* or the combined digest for *A.L.R. 3d*, *4th*, *5th*, *6th*, and *Fed.*, which include 400+ alphabetical topics.
 - Look for updates in the Annotation History tables (in the Index volumes) .
- **Find the annotated case.**
 - By its citation, e.g., 7 *A.L.R.* 6th 487 or 16 *A.L.R.* Fed. 440.
 - Volume 7, *A.L.R.* 6th series, page 487; volume 16, *A.L.R.* Fed. series, page 440.
- **Look at the article** outline, index, jurisdictional table of cases & references section for further research resources.
- **Check for updates:** in the pocket part and in a newer, updated edition.
- **Check the Annotation History Table** (in the Index volumes) for a more current annotation.
- **Call the Latest Case Service** at 1-800-225-7488.
- **Keycite or Shepardize** the citations to law.

How to Use A.L.R. in Westlaw

- A.L.R. is available from Westlaw online.
 - Law students may use their passwords.
 - Public patrons may use the **Westlaw Public Access Terminal** at Circulation.
- Click on **Directory** at the top of the toolbar, then scroll down to **Treatises, CLEs, & Other Practice Materials**, and click on **ALR**; then type your search terms into the box.
- For an explanation of how to use A.L.R. in Westlaw, see the guide *Using Secondary Sources on Westlaw* at <http://lscontent.westlaw.com/images/content/UsingSSonWL10.pdf>
- Update the cases you find by using **Keycite** (at the top of the toolbar).

How to Use A.L.R. in WestlawNext

Click on **WestlawNext** at the top of the toolbar.

Under **All Content**, click on **Secondary Sources**.

Under **By Type**, click on **American Law Reports**, and then type in your search words in the search box.

How to Use A.L.R. in Lexis

- Go to law school Lexis Nexis and use your password to sign in.
- Go to **Research Now** and click on **Lexis.com**.
- Click on **Secondary Legal**; click on **Jurisprudences, ALR & Encyclopedias**.
- Click on **ALR**, and type your terms into the search box.
- If you have a complete A.L.R. cite, use **Get A Document** and type in the citation.
 - E.g., 7 alr 6th 487 (___ alr ___)
- Update the cases by clicking on **Shepard's** at the top of the toolbar.

Bluebook Citation Format

From THE BLUEBOOK: A UNIFORM SYSTEM OF CITATION (19th ed. 2010), Rule 16.7.6, Annotations, p. 156:

“William B. Johnson, Annotation, Use of a Plea Bargain or Grant of Immunity as Improper Vouching for Credibility of Witness in Federal Cases, 76 A.L.R. FED. 409 (1986)”

References:

Berring, Robert C., and Elizabeth Edinger, *Finding the Law* (12th ed.), Res. KF 240 .045 2005

Cohen, Morris L., Robert C. Berring and Kent C. Olson, *How to Find the Law*, Res. & Ref. KF 240 .C538 1989

Mersky, Roy M. and Donald J. Dunn, *Fundamentals of Legal Research*, Res. & Ref. KF 240 .J32 2002

Olson, Kent C., *Principles of Legal Research* 2009, Res. KF240.057 2009

Helen Frazer, fall 2011