How to find law journal articles

A guide to finding journal articles using the BPP libraries and the Online Library services.

To locate a specific journal title, please use the Search Journal section of the Online Library.

To search by subject or topic, or to find a specific journal article, please use one of the online resources e.g. LexisLibrary, Westlaw.

There is no single source which contains the full text of all law journals.

How to find out if a specific journal is available from the library

The library has a range of printed and online journals. To find out where you can access the full text of any journal search for its title by going to the Online Library page and use the Search Journal feature.

Type in the name of the journal e.g. New Law Journal. Use speech marks if you know the exact name for a more precise search. Results will appear in a new window and list any of the online resources which carry the journal (click on the links to access). It may also list any of the campus libraries holding a hard copy version.

Abbreviations and citations

Journal articles are often referred to as an abbreviated citation:

Enrichment M.L.R. 2004, 67 (6), 1012-1031

title of article abbreviation of journal title year of publication volume issue page number of article

For an explanation of legal abbreviations, go to: http://www.legalabbrevs.cardiff.ac.uk/.

The Cardiff Index to Legal Abbreviations allows you to search for the meaning of abbreviations for titles of English language legal publications. It mainly covers law reports and law periodicals (journals), but also some legislative publications and major textbooks.

Raistrick, Donald. Index to legal citations and abbreviations is an alternative printed source which lists legal abbreviations and their meaning.

For further information please contact your library issue desk or email library@bpp.com

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Searching for articles on a subject

Although each journal usually has its own index, it is more efficient to search all journals at once. To do this you need to use an indexing or abstracting service. Westlaw, LexisLibrary and HeinOnline index legal journal articles. Westlaw and LexisLibrary have a large selection.

Journals on Westlaw

1. Go to the Online Resources section of the Online Library
2. Select Westlaw then log on with your Athens username and password.
3. Go to the Journals page and enter your Search terms or use the Browse function to drill down to a specific Journal and article.

Westlaw provides abstracts of articles from over 400 UK legal journals and has the full text articles for over a 100 of these.

From the advanced search screen you can search for articles by subject, or by legislation or cases cited.

4. To search for articles on a particular subject use the free text box.
5. Enter your search term(s).
6. If you enter two or more words, Westlaw will assume there is an AND between them. To search for a phrase, use inverted commas, e.g. “human rights”.

7. Click on search.
8. A search summary list appears. Click on the link to view the abstract (not the full text) of the article.
9. Where the full text is available, a further link will be provided to view the article.
10. Click on Edit Search to return to the search screen to edit it, or start a new one.
11. If the full text is not available on Westlaw, use the Search Journals section of the Online Library to check the availability of the journal in one of the BPP libraries or other online resources.

Journals on HeinOnline

HeinOnline provides access to an extensive range of law and law-related journals from the UK and also has international coverage. Mainly backruns with coverage from the first issue published through to the most recent available to HeinOnline. It doesn’t always cover the most recent issues due to contractual arrangements with individual publishers.

1. Go to the Online Resources section of the Online Library
2. Select HeinOnline then log on with your Athens username and password.

4. Choose Search to enter key terms or use the Advanced Search option to narrow down by specific article or journal titles, or even by citation if you already know the citation of an article available through HeinOnline.

For further information please contact your library issue desk or email library@bpp.com
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Journals on LexisLibrary

LexisLibrary contains the full text of over 100 law journals and provides summaries of articles from many more.

1. Go to the Online Resources section of the Online Library
2. Select LexisLibrary then log on with your Athens username and password.
3. Click on Journals in the navigation bar.

4. Enter your search terms, select a date range if you wish and click on Search.
5. Unlike Westlaw and Lawtel, if you enter two or more words, LexisLibrary will assume that it is a phrase so there is no need to use speech marks. If you wish to search for the words to appear separately in the document, add an AND between the words.
6. It is also possible to Browse the full text of journals and link to International Journals from the same page.

Lawtel

Although you can search for journal articles on Lawtel, we do not subscribe to the full text article service – please look for the full text of an article on one of the other online resources.

Other journal coverage

Occasionally, we may have hard copy (printed) holdings only, or a separate online subscription to an individual journal e.g. Media Lawyer. To access Media Lawyer use the Search Journals function on the Library home page and follow the links provided. In some instances this may take you to a publisher’s website.

If your Athens ID and password cannot be used, a separate username and password will be provided.

Search Everything: using the Ebsco Discovery Service

On the home page of the Online Library there is a ‘Search Everything’ box.

This is a library specific search engine; from a single search box search across all of the Library’s collections, including books, e-books, articles, and databases.

Law students should note that not all online resources can be searched in this way by the EBSCO Discovery Service including Westlaw and LexisLibrary, although you may be able to locate abstracts from Westlaw Journals (enabling you to then find the full text if available).

Although you may find some useful journal articles using this service you should also search these major legal resources separately as well.

What if I can’t find a journal article I need?

Students working on dissertations and Independent Research Essays may be eligible for an inter-library loan. Please visit the Loans section of the Online Library

For further information please contact your library issue desk or email library@bpp.com
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