Quicklaw® Cheat Sheet: Legal Topics Feature

Discover how to search Quicklaw content with the Legal Topics feature.

All Canadian case (court and tribunal), commentary and legislation documents on the LexisNexis® Quicklaw® service are indexed using a classification system of more than 3,000 legal topics, which are organized under 50 areas of law. You can select one or more classification topics and run the search using only the selected topics, or you can add your own keywords in the Search terms box. You can also add requirements such as date or jurisdiction restrictions.

Classification by legal topic is also available on the results screen. After running any search, you can filter the results by Topics under Result Groups in the left-hand panel.

**Use the Legal Topics feature:**
- When you would rather use preclassified content than construct your own search
- When you are unfamiliar with the topic you are researching
- When you are uncomfortable with constructing a search using Boolean connectors
- When you want to restrict your search to only those documents that deal with a specific area of law or legal concept (by adding a legal topic using the AND connector)
- When you want to add results to your search (by adding a legal topic using the OR connector)
- When you want to eliminate from your search results documents pertaining to a particular subject (by adding a legal topic using the AND NOT connector)
- When you are searching for a topic that is difficult to translate into a search

**Browsing Legal Topics by Hierarchy**

Click the Add topic(s) to search link to browse a hierarchy of topics and add the topics of your choice to your search.

1. To browse the hierarchy, click to expand or to contract listed topics. If you hover your mouse over the sign, you can choose to expand the next level only or all nested levels.
2. Click the icon to find information about the scope of a particular topic, and then click the Go Back button to return to the Hierarchy list.
3. Click the checkbox next to a topic to select the topic. Note: A top- or higher-level topic includes all sublevel topics below it.
4. Click the View Selected button at any time to review your list of selected topics. If there are multiple topics, you can click the connector link before each topic (AND, OR, AND NOT) to cycle between connectors. Click the button to remove a topic from the list.
5. Click the OK - Add to Search button in either the Hierarchy list or the Selected topics list to return to the search form. The topics you have selected appear in the Topic(s) added to search box on your search form. If there are multiple topics, you may also cycle between AND, OR and AND NOT to connect the selected topics to your search and to each other.

For Customer Support, please call 1-800-387-0899 or email service@lexisnexis.ca.
Searching for Legal Topics

If you are unsure of where your topics appear in the hierarchy window, you can search for topics using the Find look-up option. To search the classification topics, click the Add topic(s) to search link on the search form. A pop-up window will appear.

1. Select the Find radio button to search for specific legal topics.
2. From the Find Terms drop-down list, select to find topics containing, starting with or exactly matching your search terms.
3. Enter your search terms to find legal topics. You can use AND, OR and AND NOT connectors to show relationships between your search terms (e.g., aboriginal OR native).

Notes:

a. When you search using the containing option, the built-in thesaurus will suggest legal topics associated with your search terms, even if those search terms do not exactly match the name of the topic.

b. You can also search for topics covered by sections of the Civil Code of Québec or the Code of Civil Procedure by using the section number, followed by ccq, c.c.q., cpc or c.p.c. (e.g., 1457 ccq or 1457 c.c.q.).

c. The AND connector cannot be used with the starting with or exactly matching options.

4. Use the icons to navigate results lists with multiple pages.
5. Click the icon to find information about the scope of a particular topic, and then click the Go Back button to return to the topics list.
6. Click the checkbox next to a topic to select the topic. Note: A top- or higher-level topic includes all sublevel topics.
7. Click the View Selected button at any time to review your list of selected topics. If there are multiple topics, you can click the connector link before each topic (AND, OR, AND NOT) to cycle between connectors. Click the button to remove a topic from the list.
8. Click the OK - Add to Search button in either the Find list or the Selected topics list to return to the search form. The topics you have selected appear in the Topic(s) added to search box on your search form. If there are multiple topics, you may also cycle between AND, OR and AND NOT to connect the selected topics to your search and to each other.
Use the Alphabet look-up option to browse topics alphabetically and add them to your search. Click the Add topic(s) to search link on the search form. A pop-up window will open.

1. Select the Alphabet radio button to browse topics in alphabetical order.
2. Click a letter of the alphabet to view topics beginning with that letter.
3. Use the icons to navigate topic lists with multiple pages.
4. Click the icon to find information about the scope of a particular topic, and then click the Go Back button to return to the topics list.
5. Click the checkbox next to a topic to select the topic.
6. Click the View Selected button at any time to review your list of selected topics. If there are multiple topics, click the connector link before each topic (AND, OR, AND NOT) to cycle between connectors. Click the button to remove a topic from the list.
7. Click the OK - Add to Search button in either the Alphabet list or the Selected topics list to return to the search form. The topics you have selected appear in the Topic(s) added to search box on your search form. If there are multiple topics, you may also cycle between AND, OR and AND NOT to connect the selected topics to your search and to each other.

Searching with a Legal Topic Code

If you know the alphanumeric code associated to a legal topic, you can run a search using that code, without going through the Add topic(s) to search link. Enter the code in the Search terms box in the following format (not case-sensitive): #LBR1980#.

Note: The search will work only if the code is bookended by pound signs (#). Alphanumeric codes are displayed to the right of each legal topic (see examples in screenshots above).
Filtering Results by Legal Topics

When you run any search on Quicklaw, you can use the Result Groups panel on the left-hand side to filter your results by Source, Source Type, Court, Jurisdiction or Topics. By default, the Source Type group will be expanded. However, within your Preferences, you can choose Topics to open as your default results group. To filter by legal topics, expand the Topics heading and browse the hierarchy to select the topic of your choice.