

TIPS FOR STUDENTS FROM STUDENTS

Hacks on How to do legal research

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Start with a secondary source! Legal encyclopedias like Halsbury's Laws of Canada are great for getting a basic, preliminary idea of the topic. Encyclopedias also contain key cases and/or legislation on the topic, which can be a great place to start.

Pay attention to case citations! Once you've identified a key case on your topic, read it and note which cases it cites. These cited cases can point to a relevant precedent, or provide useful context for the issue.

Use filters! With Lexis+, you can filter out irrelevant cases, which helps save time. I like to narrow cases by jurisdiction, then level of court, and then topic.

Use Boolean searching! For example, use quotation marks if you want to find a certain legal phrase or word in a case, like "duty of care", "negligence", or "child support".

Use folders to organize cases! In Lexis+ you can save cases that are pertinent to your topic into folders, so that you can refer back to them later (rather than trying to find the case again from scratch).

See which cases have cited a certain piece of legislation! If you search all and/or a portion of a statute on Lexis+, the software can tell you which cases have cited the statute. This tool is extremely helpful when it comes to statutory interpretation.

Use Headnotes! The Headnotes section on the top of each case are a great way to get a quick overview of the case. This can help you decide whether or not a case is relevant to your topic, without you spending the time to read the entire thing.



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