

Anatomy of Basic Legal Citations

Citations to legal materials (such as cases, statutes, regulations, books and journal articles) generally follow a standard format that enables the reader to identify what kind of material the text refers to, and to find the cited material in a library or using library databases.

What kinds materials are cited in the footnotes at the right?

¹ *Brown v. Bd. of Educ.*, 349 U.S. 294, 301 (1955), *rev'g* 98 F. Supp. 797 (D. Kan. 1951); *Londerholm v. Unified Sch. Dist. No. 500*, 430 P.2d 188, 194, 199 Kan. 312 (Kan. 1967).

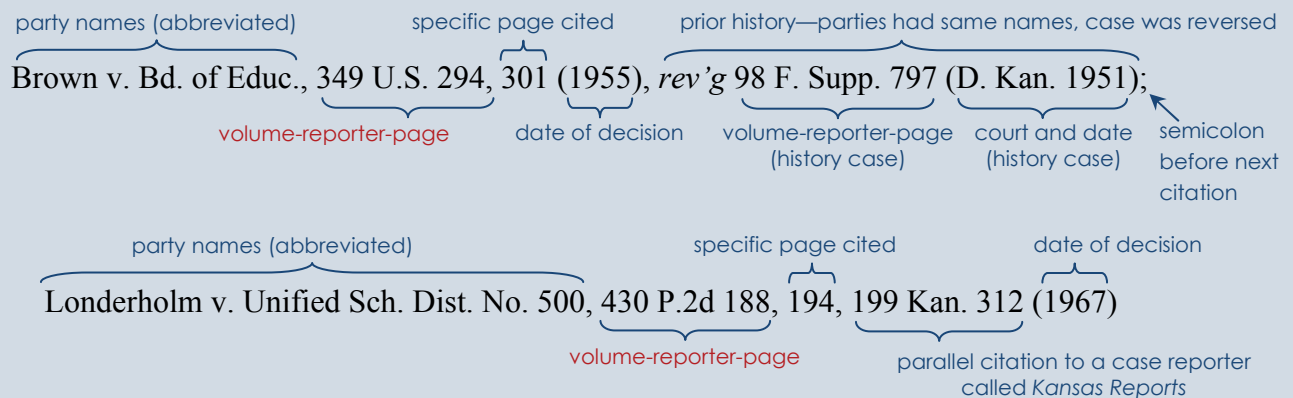
² Civil Rights Act of 1964, P.L. 88-352, 78 Stat. 241 (codified at 42 U.S.C. § 1971 et seq. (2006)).

³ 34 C.F.R. § 100.3 (2013); 2 Cal. Code Reg. § 10,006 (2014); 65 Fed. Reg. 26,464 (May 5, 2000).

⁴ FRANCES LISA BAER, *RESISTANCE TO PUBLIC SCHOOL DESEGREGATION* 38 (2008).

⁵ D. Marvin Jones, *The Original Meaning of Brown: Seattle, Segregation and the Re-writing of History*, 63 U. MIAMI L. REV. 629, 630 (2009).

CASES

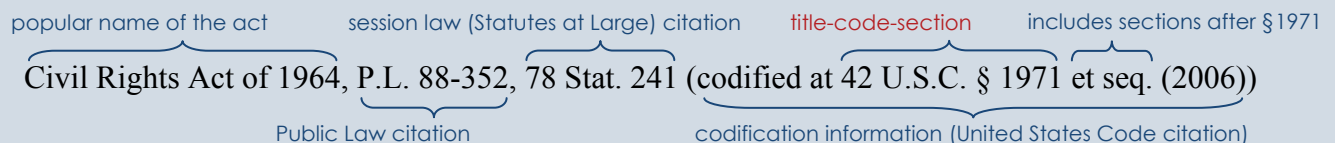


What is it? Footnote 1 cites two different cases—the U.S. Supreme Court case, *Brown* (along with the District Court of Kansas case that the Supreme Court reversed), and a Kansas Supreme Court case, *Londerholm* (including a parallel citation). A semicolon appears between the two cases cited.

How can you tell? Most case citations start with the party names, with a “v.” (for versus) between them.

Where can you find it? Many databases allow you to find a case “by citation,” using the **volume-reporter-page** information.

STATUTES



What is it? Footnote 2 cites a federal statute, and provides three locations for it—Public Laws, *Statutes at Large*, and *United States Code*. Usually you only need one of these to find it.

How can you tell? Most statute citations give a code title and section number (§).

Where can you find it? Many databases allow you to find a statute “by citation,” using the **title-code-section** information.

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REGULATIONS

publication date
publication date
publication date
34 C.F.R. § 100.3 (2013);
2 Cal. Code Reg. § 10,006 (2014);
65 Fed. Reg. 26,464 (May 5, 2000)
title-source-section
title-source-section
volume-source-page
(source name shows this is a California reg.)

What is it? Footnote 3 cites two federal regulatory sources—a final regulation codified in the *Code of Federal Regulations*, and a proposed regulation in the *Federal Register*—and a state regulation.

How can you tell? Federal regulations are published in these two publications, abbreviated as C.F.R. and Fed. Reg.; state regulatory sources often have a title that includes abbreviations like “Reg[s].”

Where can you find it? In some databases you can find a regulation “by citation,” using the **title-source-section** or **volume-source-page** information.

BOOKS

author name
specific page cited
FRANCES LISA BAER,
RESISTANCE TO PUBLIC SCHOOL DESEGREGATION
38 (2008)

title
publication date

What is it? Footnote 4 cites a book.

How can you tell? Usually the author and title of the book are given in LARGE AND SMALL CAPITAL letters; sometimes the author name is given in Plain Type, with the book title in *Italics* instead.

Where can you find it? You can look up books at the Law Library on LawCat, using the **title**.

ARTICLES

author name
article title
D. Marvin Jones,
The Original Meaning of Brown: Seattle, Segregation and the Rewriting of History,
63 U. MIAMI L. REV. 629,
630 (2009)
volume-journal-page
publication date
(journal title is abbreviated)

specific page cited

What is it? Footnote 5 cites a journal article.

How can you tell? The author name is given in Plain Type, with the article title in *Italics* and the journal title in LARGE AND SMALL CAPITAL letters. Citation to a chapter in a book may look similar, but with the word “in” after the *italic* title (the title of the chapter).

Where can you find it? Many databases allow you to find a journal article “by citation,” using the **volume-journal-page** information; if not available online, you can look up the **journal title** on LawCat, to see if the Law Library has the volume/year you need.