1. Research Strategies for Locating Cases

Cautions about searching for cases by keywords
- You may be using keywords or terminology not used by Courts
- There is a massive volume of published and unpublished judgments in Canada. Keyword searching may result in a very large search result

Recommendation - start with a secondary source such as a journal article, legal treatise, casebook or your Criminology textbook. These secondary sources will provide 1) an overview of the law and 2) citations to leading case law in your area.

2. Secondary Sources at Camosun Library

Legal treatises:
- Some books are located on Course Reserve but majority of secondary legal books will be on the 2nd floor Lansdowne Library in call numbers KE and KF.
- To browse a selection of legal treatises, see the Criminal Justice Research guide > camosun.ca.libguides.com/crim > Find Books.
- Review footnotes to cases cited in these law books. Legal treatises will also have a Table of Cases which lists all cases cited in that book.

Legal journals – recommend searching the Academic Search Complete database available through the Criminal Justice Research guide > camosun.ca.libguides.com/crim > Find Articles. Review footnotes to cases cited in your article.

Newspapers – recommend searching the Canadian Major Dailies database through the Criminal Justice Research guide > camosun.ca.libguides.com/crim > Find Articles. Newspapers can be a valuable source of background information about high profile cases and can verify important details about a case (hearing date, Court where case was heard, if case was heard by jury, etc.).

3. Searching “Judgments of the Supreme Court of Canada” database

- Go to the Criminal Justice Research guide available at camosun.ca.libguides.com/crim
- Under the Legal Research tab, scroll down to the Law Reports and Decisions heading, and select Judgments of the Supreme Court of Canada database hyperlink.
- Click on Advanced Search, under the main search box.
- Use a search strategy (or combination of strategies) below:
  - Enter a case citation or case name you found via secondary sources
  - Using the On appeal from drop-down menu, select the jurisdiction you wish to search
  - Select from the Subjects drop-down menu to search for cases within specific divisions of law (e.g., criminal law, family law, torts)
  - Optional: you can also limit your search by Date between
  - Other search tips are available at https://scc-csc.lexum.com/scc-csc/en/q.do

EXERCISE 1: Using one of the research strategies listed above, locate and record a citation to a Supreme Court of Canada case in the areas of Torts, Criminal or Family law.
EXERCISE 2: Scan through your SCC judgment and record citations for case(s) of interest from Canadian Courts of Appeal.

Searching “Courts of British Columbia” database

- Go to the Criminal Justice Research guide available on the Camosun Library website: camosun.ca.libguides.com/crim
- Under the Legal Research tab, scroll down to the Law Reports and Decisions heading, and select the Courts of British Columbia database hyperlink.
- Click on the Go to Search Judgments page heading, under the quick search box
- Use a strategy (or combination of strategies) below:
  - Enter a case citation you found via secondary sources or other case judgment(s)
  - Enter case name or style of cause you found via secondary sources or other case judgment(s)
  - Recommendation: run keyword searches as a last option – note you will need to use keywords to help locate cases from the specific divisions of law called for in your assignment (Criminal law, Family law, Torts)
- More Search tips are available at https://www.courts.gov.bc.ca/Search20Help.pdf

EXERCISE 3: Using one of the search methods above, locate a BC Court of Appeal decision for your area of law. Record the case citation below.

Searching for Judgments in other Canadian Jurisdictions

- Go to the Criminal Justice Research guide available on the Camosun Library website: camosun.ca.libguides.com/crim
- Under the Legal Research tab, scroll down to the Law Reports and Decisions heading and select CanLII

Search Tips

- Under Primary law heading, choose your jurisdiction of interest. For the CRIM 170 assignment, choose the Court of Appeal or the highest court for the province or territory of interest.
- You can browse judgments by date
- You can browse recent decisions
- Recommendation: run keyword searches as a last option:
  - Search by phrase (use quotation marks around your terms).
  - /p searches for your terms in the same paragraph. Ex. “spousal support” /p “same sex marriage”
  - /s searches for your terms in the same sentence. Ex. “spousal support” /s “same sex marriage”
  - More CanLII search tips available at https://www.canlii.org/en/info/search.html

EXERCISE 3: Using one of the search methods above, locate a BC Court of Appeal decision for your area of law. Record the case citation below.
Legal Citation in APA Citation Style (6th ed)

The APA Publication Manual says: "References to legal materials...which include court decisions, statutes and other legislative materials, and various secondary sources, will be more useful to the reader if they provide the information in the conventional format of legal citations" (2009, p. 216).

General format for citing cases in APA Style:


In-text citations: For your in-text (parenthetical) citations, use the same form as you would in APA for a work with no author (i.e., Name of case, date, page or paragraph number when appropriate). Example:

(Canada Post v. Lépine, 2009)


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Use AskAway, a chat-based library help service
library@camosun.bc.ca
in person at the Research Help Desk
phone 370-3622 at Lansdowne;
370-4630 at Interurban