



The Law Society

E01 HOW TO Search BAILII

Contents

BAILII is an interactive database of primary legal material. It has been created by the British and Irish Legal Information Institute, who are a not-for-profit organisation. Material is available in full text and without charge and can be browsed or searched using the BAILII search engine. Material is provided from existing free websites and directly from the courts, tribunals and government departments. From the front page of the BAILII website it is possible to access similar databases from around the world.

Case law

BAILII provides full text judgments from recent cases heard by the House of Lords, Privy Council and Court of Appeal, as well as the Scottish Court of Session and the Irish Supreme Court. It also includes judgments from many other courts and tribunals, including the European Court of Justice and the European Court of Human Rights.

Legislation

Full text primary and secondary legislation from England and Wales, Ireland, Northern Ireland and Scotland. Legislation is provided as originally published.

Other materials

Full text of recent reports and consultations from the Law Commission, the Scottish Law Commission and the Irish Law Reform Commission.

For more details of the content, click on each of the Basic Search options to view the different courts, Commissions and types of legislation that can be searched. See also the Copyright Policy and Disclaimers links at the bottom of the homepage.

Getting started

Access BAILII by typing www.bailii.org in the internet address field or go Law Society Library Online and select BAILII from the external links. From the homepage you can select the database you wish to search, view recently added decisions or cases of interest. You can also link through to similar databases from around the world.

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Finding a case

Click on the case law search under Basic search. The basic search allows you to search for a case by citation (neutral or reported), party name, keyword or phrase – it will search for ALL search terms. You can limit your search by the jurisdiction or court and can sort your results by a range of options. You do not need to use brackets or capitals in your search terms.

The screenshot shows the 'Basic Search' interface. At the top, there are links: [Basic Search](#) | [Legislation Search](#) | [Other Materials Search](#) | [Advanced Search](#) | [Multidatabase Search](#). The main search area has several input fields and a 'Search' button. The fields are: 'Citation:' with a text box and example 'e.g. [2000] 1 AC 360'; 'Case name:' with a text box and example 'e.g. barber v somerset'; 'All of these words:' with a text box and example 'e.g. breach fiduciary duty'; 'Exact phrase:' with a text box and example 'e.g. parliamentary sovereignty'; 'Any of these words:' with a text box and example 'e.g. waste pollution radiation'; 'Advanced query:' with a text box, a '[Help]' link, and example 'e.g. pollut* and (nuclear or radioactiv*)'; 'Optional dates:' with 'From' and 'To' text boxes and example 'Enter as yyyy, yyyymm, or yyyymmdd'; 'Sort results by:' with radio buttons for 'Date', 'Jurisdiction', 'Title', and 'Relevance' (selected); 'Highlight search terms in result' with radio buttons for 'Yes' (selected) and 'No'; and 'To limit jurisdictions, use tick-boxes below:'. Below this are three columns of checkboxes for jurisdictions: 'United Kingdom: Courts' (House of Lords, Supreme Court, Privy Council), 'United Kingdom: Tribunals' (Asylum and Immigration Tribunal, Upper Tribunal (Administrative Appeals Chamber), Upper Tribunal (Finance and Tax), Upper Tribunal (Lands Chamber), Competition Appeals Tribunal), 'England and Wales: Courts' (House of Lords, Supreme Court, Privy Council, Court of Appeal, Court of Appeal (Civil Division), Court of Appeal (Criminal Division), High Court, Administrative Court, Admiralty Division), 'Scotland: Courts' (House of Lords, Supreme Court, Privy Council, Scottish Court of Session, Scottish High Court of Justiciary, Scottish Sheriff Court), and 'Ireland' (Supreme Court of Ireland, Irish Court of Criminal Appeal).

BAILII will present a list of hyperlinks that connect to documents found in your selected databases and that match your search criteria. To view the full text, double click on the hyperlink of your case.

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Finding legislation

Click on the legislation search under Basic search. The basic search allows you to search for a piece of legislation by title, keyword or phrase – it will search for ALL search terms. You can limit your search by the jurisdiction or whether it is primary or secondary legislation and can sort your results by a range of options. You do not need to use brackets or capitals in your search terms.

You are here: [BAILII](#) >> Legislation Search
URL: http://www.bailii.org/form/search_legis.html

[Basic Search](#) | [Case Law Search](#) | [Other Materials Search](#) | [Advanced Search](#) | [Multidatabase Search](#)

Title of Legislation: e.g. sustainable energy

All of these words: e.g. regulation carbon emissions

Exact phrase: e.g. carbon emissions

Any of these words: e.g. waste pollution radiation

Advanced query: [Help](#) e.g. regulat* and (carbon or solvent) /5/ emissions

Optional dates: From To Enter as yyyy, yyyymm, or yyyymmdd

Sort results by: ☐ Date ☐ Jurisdiction ☐ Title ☒ Relevance

Highlight search terms in result: ☒ Yes ☐ No

To limit jurisdictions, use tick-boxes below:

☐ United Kingdom ☐ Welsh Legislation ☐ Scotland

☐ Legislation ☐ Statutory Instruments made by the National Assembly for Wales ☐ Acts of the Scottish Parliament

☐ Statutory Instruments of the Scottish Parliament

BAILII will present a list of hyperlinks that connect to documents found in your selected databases and that match your search criteria. To view your selected record, double click on the hyperlinks. For some early UK Acts, you can view the pdf as enacted or follow the link through to the [Statute Law Database](#) for updates and information concerning the legislation.

Finding other material

Click on the other material search under Basic search. The basic search allows you to search across a range of other material by title, keyword or phrase – it will search for ALL search terms. You can limit your search by the jurisdiction or if you know the type of material you are searching for and can sort your results by a range of options. You do not need to use brackets or capitals in your search terms.

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Advanced searching hints and tips

You can use the Advanced searching option if you want to search with a combination of term connectors. The Help link on every page will link you through to further information about term connectors and expanders, and common 'stopwords'.

To search for a phrase, use " "

To find terms anywhere in the same document, use **and**

To find either one of two or more phrases, use **or**

To find one term but exclude another, use **not**

To find terms within 50 words of each other use **near**

To find terms within n terms of each other where n is a number use **/n/**

To find a word with a variety of endings use *****

If you are not sure which letter to use ?

eg "conditional fee agreement"

eg accident and negligence

eg "judicial review" or "permission to appeal"

eg murder not manslaughter

eg retirement near benefit

eg foster /n/ adoption

eg tax* (will find taxation, taxing, taxi etc)

eg wom?n (will find women, woman etc)

Printing

To print your documents click on the printer icon  towards the top of the screen. Follow the instructions for printing.

Exiting BAILII

Type a new internet address or close the Internet connection to leave BAILII.

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