Legal encyclopaedia
Laws of Australia

Why use Laws of Australia?

- Comprehensive coverage of all areas of Australian law
- Learn of legal principles and elements to establish
- Find references to major case law and key legislation

Tip:
It can be useful to consult both Laws of Australia and Halsbury’s Laws of Australia, as coverage on different topics can vary and each is updated at different times.

How to access Laws of Australia

- Go to the Library homepage at www.flinders.edu.au/library
- Click on Databases (under Finding)
- Type in Laws of Australia and click on the title

How information is organised

Information is organised into 89 subject related ‘titles’ – these are broad categories of law such as contract, constitutional, criminal law, etc.

These titles are divided into more specific ‘chapters’ – for example, for criminal law there are chapters on liability, assault, sentencing, etc.

Each chapter has a number of ‘paragraphs’ that provide the details about the law
There are a number of different ways to search this encyclopaedia depending on what you are looking for. The 3 main types of searches are:

1. You want to find information on a particular **subject**
2. You want to find references to a particular **case**
3. You want to find references to a piece or section of **legislation**

- Use an asterisk * to find different **variations** of a word e.g. negligen* will find negligence and negligent
- You can add multiple search terms to different **search boxes** to construct a more specific search
- Click on the **search field** (e.g. ‘free text’, ‘words and phrases’) for more search tips
- If you don’t find relevant information straight away, **try different terminology** – it could just be that Laws of Australia describes the legal principle slightly differently. If that still doesn’t work, try the browse option...
You can also browse Laws of Australia, as you would a table of contents.

1. Look at the list on the left side of the search screen to find the broad subject area you are interested in

2. Click on the plus icon (+) to view more specific legal principles

To search or browse...

Searching is useful when you are not sure how the concept you are interested in would be categorised.

But you can get a lot of irrelevant hits if the concept is quite broad, or no hits if you use different terminology. In such instances, browsing is a useful option.

Results list

Gives the title of the paragraph and a ‘breadcrumb trail’ that indicates the broad category the principle comes under. This helps to identify relevant commentary.

Click on the Document “The Laws of Australia” for the paragraph you wish to read.
Information / commentary provided

Table of Contents
Helps put the paragraph in context

Print, email or save the paragraph

Footnotes
Refer you to relevant authorities – cases and legislation

Remember to update!
Be sure to check the “Current as at” date, given just above the text of the commentary – legal encyclopaedias give details of the law as at a specific point in time and you may need to update the primary sources cited to ensure the legal principles are still current.

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