Primary Sources: General principles

- Put the footnote marker at the end of a sentence, unless it relates to a specific word or phrase.
- OSCOLA uses little punctuation; no full stops in abbreviations or between initials in author’s names.
- Close footnotes with a full stop. Use semi-colons to separate multiple citations for a single footnote.
- If citing legislation and case law for a single proposition, put the legislation before the cases, separated by a semi-colon. If citing primary and secondary sources for a single proposition, put the primary sources before the secondary sources.
- If a case is unreported but has a neutral citation, give that. If an unreported case does not have a neutral citation (which will always be the case before 2001), give the court and the date of the judgment in brackets after the name of the case. There is no need to add the word ‘unreported’.
- Pre-1865, if a judgment is reprinted in the English Reports, give the citations of both the original report and the English Reports reprint, separated by a comma.
- If a case has a European Case Law Identifier (ECLI), insert it after the case name followed by a comma and the law report citation (if there is one). For unreported cases, use the ECLI.
- If the name of a case is given in the text, it is not necessary to repeat it in the footnote, see: “…the no-conflict rule advocated by Lord Upjohn in Boulting v Boardman, \(^3\) and in the earlier…”

\(3\) [1967] 2 AC 46 (HL).

- When citing legislation, if all the source detail is in the text, there’s no need for a footnote at all, see:

‘This case highlights the far-reaching judicial role ushered in by the Human Rights Act 1998’.

Where the text does not include the name of the Act or the relevant section, use a footnote, see:

‘British courts must only consider Strasbourg jurisprudence; they are not bound by it’ \(^4\).


- Statutes are split into parts (pt/pts), sections (s/ss), subsections (sub-s/sub-ss), paragraphs (para/paras), subparagraphs (subpara/subparas) and may have additional schedules (sch/schs).
- Statutory Instruments also use regulations (reg/regs), rules (r/rr) and articles (art/ats).
- If a subsequent citation is in the footnote immediately following the full citation, use ‘ibid’. Used alone, ‘ibid’ means ‘in the very same place’ while ‘ibid 345’ means ‘in the same work, but this time at page 345’. If there are other footnotes in between the original footnote and the next time the source is cited, use a shortened version of the case name with a cross-citation in brackets to the footnote with the full citation (n). For legislation, indicate the short form at the end of the first full citation and use this in subsequent citations.

\(^1\) Austin v Commissioner of Police for the Metropolis [2009] AC 564. (full citation)

\(^2\) ibid 567. (citation immediately after the full citation)

\(^10\) Austin (n 1) 565. (a shortened citation later in the work, with a cross-citation to the full citation)

\(^12\) Human Rights Act 1998 (HRA 1998) s 7. (full citation, with a shortened or abbreviated title at the end)

\(^23\) HRA 1998, s 33. (subsequent citation, using a shortened version of the title)
Primary Sources: Examples

- Cases with a neutral citation
  *Party names* | [year] | court | case number.

If the case also has a citation from a law report series, use a comma to separate it from the neutral citation:


- Cases without a neutral citation
  *Party names* | [year] OR (year) | volume | report abbreviation | first page | (court).

Use square brackets to pinpoint paragraphs, using just the number if referring to a page. Separate multiple pinpoints with a comma:

Callery v Gray [2001] EWCA Civ 1117 [42], [51].

If citing a particular judge:


- Cases before 1865
  Boulton v Jones (1857) 2 H&N 564

If a judgment is reprinted in the *English Reports*:

Boulton v Jones (1857) 2 H&N 564, 157 ER 232.

- Acts and Statutory Instruments
  Short title | year, | section or SI number.
  Act of Supremacy 1558, s 7.

- Bills
  Title | HC Bill | (session) | [number]. OR
  Title | HL Bill | (session) | number.
  Consolidated Fund HC Bill (2008-09) [5].
  Academies HL Bill (2010-11) 1.

- Explanatory notes to statutes
  Explanatory Notes to the Charities Act 2006, para 15

- EU cases
  Case number | party names | [year] | report abbreviation | first page.

Treat an ECLI as a neutral citation using a comma to separate it from any law report citation:

Case number | party names | ECLI, | [year] | report abbreviation | first page.
Case C:542/09 Commission v the Netherlands EU:C:2012:346.

- European Court of Human Rights cases
  *Party names* | (year) | volume | law report abbreviation | first page.

- EU treaties/protocols
  Title | [year] | OJ series | issue/first page.

- EU Regulations, Directives, Decisions, Recommendations, Opinions

- Opinions of Advocates General

- Decisions of the European Commission

As of 1 January 2015 the numbering of EU legislation changed. All legislation published since that date has a number in the format: (domain) | year/number.

Secondary Sources: General Principles

- Cite the author's name as it appears in the publication.
- If there are more than three authors, give the name of the first author followed by 'and others'.
- An organisation or institution can be cited as an author. If there is no author, start with the title.
- In footnotes, the author’s first name/initial(s) precede their surname whereas in bibliographies, the surname precedes the initial(s). See the Creating a Bibliography guide for more details.
- Italicise the titles of books and publications with ISBNs. Use single quotation marks for other titles, such as journal article titles.
- Capitalise the first letter of all major words in a title; words such as ‘for’, ‘and’, ‘or’ and ‘the’ do not need a capital letter unless they begin the title or subtitle.
- Pinpoints to parts (pt/pts), chapters (ch/chs), paragraphs (para/paras) and pages come at the end of the citation. Page numbers do not require ‘p’ or ‘pp’. If citing a chapter/part and a page number, insert a comma before the page number. If appropriate, give a specific range of pages.
- Citations of publications which are only available online should end with the web address (URL) in angled brackets < > followed by the date of most recent access.
- Cite all publications with an ISBN as if they were books, whether read online or in print. Older books may not have an ISBN, but should be cited as books even if read online.
- If an article is read online but it is also available in print, cite it as if it was the print version.
- Don't cite databases such as Westlaw or Lexis as a source; cite the actual case/legislation/article.
- Treat case notes with titles as if they were journal articles. Where there is no title, use the name of the case in italics and add ‘note’ at the end of the citation.
- Incorporate quotations of up to three lines into the text within single quotation marks. Longer quotations should be presented in an indented paragraph, with no further indent of the first line.
- If a subsequent citation is in the footnote immediately following the full citation, use ‘ibid’. Used alone, ‘ibid’ means ‘in the very same place’ while ‘ibid 345’ means ‘in the same work, but at page 345’. If there are other footnotes in between the original footnote and the next time the source is cited, use the author surname with a cross-citation in brackets (n) to the footnote in which the full citation can be found. If several works by the same author are being cited, use the author surname and the title of the work, see:

> 4 Robert Stevens, *Torts and Rights* (OUP 2007). (full citation)

> 5 ibid 166. (citation immediately after the full citation)

> 10 Stevens (n 4) 212. (the author surname with a cross-citation to the full citation)

- Citing a publication cited within another text is known as secondary referencing and should be avoided; you should always try to read the original text. If that isn't possible, use ‘as cited in’ for secondary sources. For a case cited within a case, use ‘citing’ see:


In the bibliography, cite only the source you have actually read.

- For other types of secondary sources, follow the general rule below.

**Author, | ‘title’ | (additional information, | publisher | year).**
Secondary Sources: Examples

- **Books**
  
  **Author, | title | (additional information, | edition, | publisher | year).**
  

- **Edited books**
  

- **Chapters of edited books**
  
  **Author, | ‘title’ | in editor (ed), | book title | (additional information, | publisher | year).**
  

- **Journal articles**
  
  **Author, | ‘title’ | [year] OR (year) | journal name or abbreviation | first page of article.**
  

  Article with a pinpoint to page 558:
  

- **Online journals**
  
  **Author, | ‘title’ | [year] OR (year) | volume/issue | journal name or abbreviation | <web address> | date accessed.**
  

- **Command Papers/Law Commission Reports**
  
  **Dept., | title | (CP number, year). OR Dept., | title | (Law Com number, year).**
  


- **Case notes**
  
  Treat these like journal articles. Where there is no title, use the name of the case in italics and add (note) at the end of the citation:

  Andrew Ashworth, ‘*R v (Singh) v Chief Constable of the West Midlands Police*’ [2006] Crim LR 441 (note).

  If the case in the note is referred to in the text, it is not necessary to put the name of the case in the case note citation:

  Andrew Ashworth [2006] Crim LR 441 (note).

- **Encyclopaedias**
  
  **Title | (edition, year) | volume.**
  

- **Hansard**
  
  **HL Deb OR HC Deb | date, | volume, | column.**
  
  
  HC Deb 4 July 1996, vol 280, col 505W.
  

- **Websites and blogs**
  
  Follow the general principles for citing secondary sources:


- **Newspaper articles**
  
  **Author, | title | newspaper name | (city of publication, date).**
  

- **TV documentaries**
  
  **Name of Director or Producer, | ‘title’ | [Television broadcast] | (additional information, | publisher | year).**
  

See the Law School Citation Guide or [http://www.law.ox.ac.uk/publications/oscola.php](http://www.law.ox.ac.uk/publications/oscola.php) for more detail.