

Citing Cases – The Basics of Rule 10 for Law Review Articles

United States v. MacDonald, 531 F.2d 196, 199-200 (4th Cir. 1976).

Reporter volume,
Report abbreviation,
First page of case.

Deciding court,
jurisdiction
Date of decision

Parties names

pages
referenced

State v. Enlow, 536 S.W.2d 533, 535 (Mo. Ct. App. 1976).

Reporter volume,
Report abbreviation,
First page of case.

State,
Court,
Date of decision

Names

pages
referenced

I. Case Names

A. When a case is referenced in a textual sentence, the names should conform to the rules listed below. For example, In *Southern Pacific Co. v. Jensen*, 244 U.S. 205 (1917), Justice McReynolds stressed the value of uniform laws.

B. When a case is referenced in a separate citation clause or sentence, follow all rules below, use ordinary roman type, *and* abbreviate any word contained in T.6 and T.10 of the Bluebook. Any word over eight letters may also be abbreviated if “substantial space” is saved and the result is clear. For example, *S. Pac. Co. v. Jensen*, 244 U.S. 205, 225-26 (1917) (Pitney, J., dissenting).

C. Use only the first listed party on each side

D. Omit “the” as the first word of a party’s name unless it is a part of the commonly known name. E.g., *The Civil Rights Cases*.

E. Omit words indicating multiple parties, e.g., “et al.”

F. Phrases like “on the relation of,” “for the use of,” and “on behalf of” should be abbreviated as *ex rel.*

G. Phrases like “in the matter of,” “petition of,” “application of,” and similar expressions should be abbreviated as *In re.*

H. Abbreviate widely known acronyms (see Rule 6.1(b)), such as N.L.R.B., C.I.A., etc., Also use the following abbreviations: “&,” “Ass’n,” “Bros.,” “Co.,” “Corp.,” “Inc.,” “Ltd.,” and “No.”

I. Omit terms like “administrator,” “appellee,” “executor,” and “licensee.”

J. Where states are parties:

If:

1. the case name contains “People of,” “State of,” or “Commonwealth of,”
and
2. the court deciding the case is the same as the named state,

Then:

retain the word “People,” “State,” or “Commonwealth.”

E.g., “Commonwealth of Pennsylvania v. Ferrone” becomes *Commonwealth v. Ferrone* if a Pennsylvania court decided the case.

If the court deciding the case is not the same as the named state, retain the name of the state only and drop the preceding phrase.

E.g., *Pennsylvania v. Ferrone* if the U.S. Supreme Court decided the case.

K. Never abbreviate “United States.”

II. Reporter and parenthetical information

Federal Cases

Reporter information (volume, reporter name, first page of case, and internal pages)

- Cite federal cases to the reporters listed in T.1 of the Bluebook.

Supreme Court – United States Reports (U.S.) or Supreme Court Reporter (S.Ct.) if not yet printed in U.S.

Courts of Appeals – F.3d, F.2d, F.

District Courts – F. Supp. 2d, F. Supp.

Parenthetical (court and date)

- Include in the parenthetical:

1. the name of the court using abbreviations from T. 7 and T. 10 in the Bluebook (omit if decided by the U.S. Supreme Court) and
2. the year the case was decided.

Examples:

Meritor Sav. Bank v. Binson, 477 U.S. 57 (1986).

Charlesworth v. Mack, 925 F.2d 314 (1st Cir. 1991).

Al-Marri v. Bush, 274 F. Supp. 2d 1003 (C.D. Ill. 2003).

State cases

Reporter information (volume, reporter name, first page of case, and internal pages)

- If a public domain cite is available, include that cite in addition to the regional reporter.

- If no public domain cite is available, cite to regional reporters only. If the case is not published in the regional reporter, cite to a source in which the case is published.

- Public domain cite and other reporter information is available for each state in T.1 of the Bluebook.

Example: Beck v. Beck, 1999 ME 110, ¶ 6, 733 A.2d 981, 983 (1999).

Parenthetical (state, court, and date)

1. Use the state and court abbreviations listed in T.1.
2. Any information about state and court that is clear from the reporter name should be deleted from the parenthetical. Use state and court abbreviations from T.1, T.6, and T.11 in the Bluebook.
3. Always indicate the year of decision.

Examples:

Beck v. Beck, 1999 ME 110, ¶ 6, 733 A.2d 981, 983 (1999).

This opinion was issued by the highest court; the abbreviation for this court from T.1 is Me. This information was already conveyed by the public domain cite so it is deleted from the parenthetical.

Sigal v. Mandelker, 493 N.Y.S.2d 769 (App. Div. 1985)

This opinion was issued by the Appellate Division of the N.Y. Supreme Court. T.1 lists N.Y. App. Div. as the state and court abbreviation. The state can be deleted from the parenthetical since that information is conveyed by the reporter title.

People v. Cathey, 681 N.W.2d 661 (Mich. Ct. App. 2004)

This opinion was issued by the Michigan Ct. of Appeals; the abbreviation from T.1 is Mich. Ct. App. None of this information is indicated by the reporter so the full abbreviation is included.

III. Other information that may be included in a case cite

Value (weight) of authority in a parenthetical – Rule 10.6, 10.7.1

Examples: per curiam, en banc, plurality opinion, dissenting opinion

These terms should be included in a parenthetical following the cite

Example: Wersba v. Seiler, 393 F.2d 937 (3d Cir. 1968) (per curiam).

Explanatory phrases in a parenthetical (see Rule 1.5 for further information on explanatory material)

Example: indicating the exact holding

Prior and subsequent history – Rule 10.7

Always indicate subsequent history

- omit denial of cert. and comparable rulings if the case was decided over two years ago.
- omit remand or denial of a rehearing unless relevant to your point.

Indicate prior history only if relevant to your point (prior history goes before subsequent history).

Name changes on appeal – Rule 10.7.2

- subsequent history: *rev'd sub nom.* Leroy v. Great ...
- prior history: just list name
- don't include name change in cert. denied

Indicate significant treatment

Example: *overruled by*

T.8 in the Bluebook contains commonly used phrases for history & weight

Kubrick v. United States, 581 F.2d 1092 (3d Cir. 1978), *aff'g* 435 F. Supp. 166 (E.D. Pa. 1977), *rev'd*, 444 U.S. 111 (1979).

A comma is not used after phrases followed by case citations as their direct object.

IV. Unreported cases - Rule 10.8

Cases available in slip opinion only

Cite name, docket number, jurisdiction, and full date.

Example: Groucho Marx Prods. V. Playboy Enters., No. 77 Civ. 1782, slip op. at 6 (S.D.N.Y. Dec. 30, 1977).

If online only

Follow Rule 18

Depublished cases

Mitchell v. Cal. Fair Plan Ass'n, 260 Cal. Rptr. 3 (Ct. App. 1989) (depublished).