

LEGAL WRITING & RESEARCH - INTRODUCTIONPage 1 of 13

Q - What is legal research?

Legal research means finding the law and checking how it applies to a question.

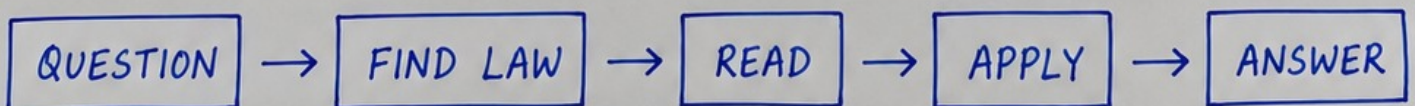
Q - Why do we do it?

To know the correct rule, support an answer and solve a legal problem.

Easy example:

A customer gets a defective phone. We find the consumer law and relevant cases.

Steps in legal research:



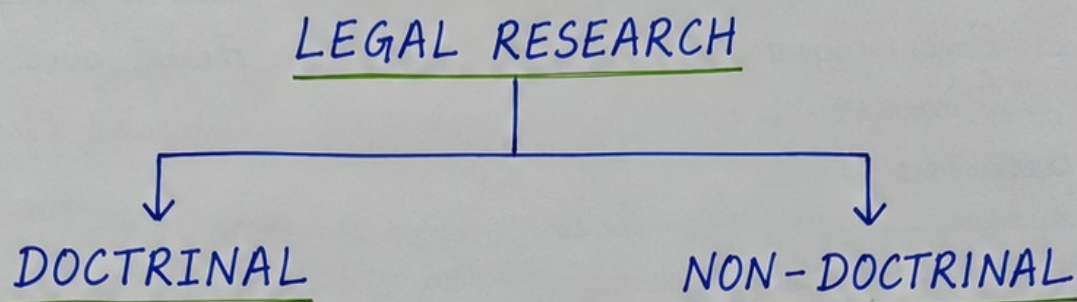
Key words:

Accurate facts + correct law + clear writing.

Note: Do not guess the law.

TYPES OF LEGAL RESEARCH

Q - What are the main kinds?



Doctrinal = study written laws, judgments and books.

It asks: What does the law say?

Example: Read a statute and court rulings on privacy.

Non-doctrinal = study what happens in real life.

It asks: How is the law working?

Example: Ask people whether they can use legal aid.

Both are useful. Choose the method to match the question.

Remember →

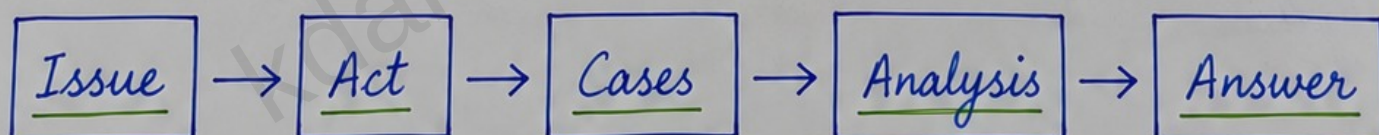
Doctrinal = law in books;

Non-doctrinal = law in action.

DOCTRINAL RESEARCH - EASY STEPS

Q - How do we do doctrinal research?

- ①. Choose one legal question.
- ②. Find the relevant Act / section.
- ③. Read related judgments.
- ④. Check legal books and journal articles.
- ⑤. Compare different interpretations.
- ⑥. Write a reasoned answer with citations.



Example :

Question: How do courts protect freedom of speech?
Read Article 19 and important decisions.

Note: Use the actual statutory words; check later amendments and judgments.

NON-DOCTRINAL RESEARCH - EASY STEPS

Q - What is non-doctrinal research?

It studies people's real experiences with law.

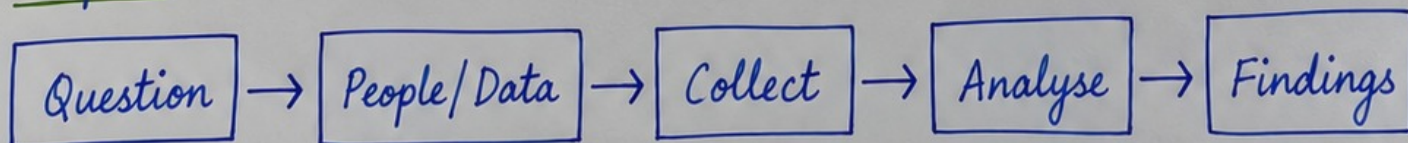
Methods :

- ① Interviews - asking people questions.
- ② Survey - same questions to many people.
- ③ Observation - seeing a process directly.
- ④ Records - reading official data.

Example :

Ask 30 people if they know about free legal aid.

Steps :



Important :

Consent and privacy matter. Never invent answers.

Data types :

Primary data = collected by you.

Secondary data = already published.

LEGAL METHODS - UNIT IV

2021

DOCTRINAL v. NON-DOCTRINAL

<u>Doctrinal</u>	<u>Non-doctrinal</u>
Studies law in books.	Studies law in society.
Acts, cases, books.	Surveys, interviews, observation.
What is the rule?	Does the rule work?
<u>Example:</u> Study legal-aid law.	<u>Example:</u> Ask people whether legal aid reached them.

Q - Can both methods be used together?

Yes! This is often called mixed-method research.

READ LAW + CHECK REAL LIFE = DEEPER STUDY

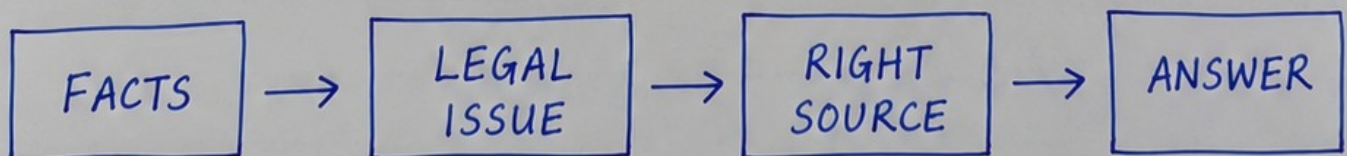
WHY IS LEGAL RESEARCH IMPORTANT?

Q - Why do lawyers research?

1. Find the correct law.
2. Understand a client's problem.
3. Support arguments with cases.
4. Avoid wrong advice.
5. Find gaps in a law.
6. Suggest fair solutions.

Example: A tenant says the deposit was not returned.
First check the facts, rental terms and applicable law.

Note: Good research = checked facts + reliable sources + honest reasoning.

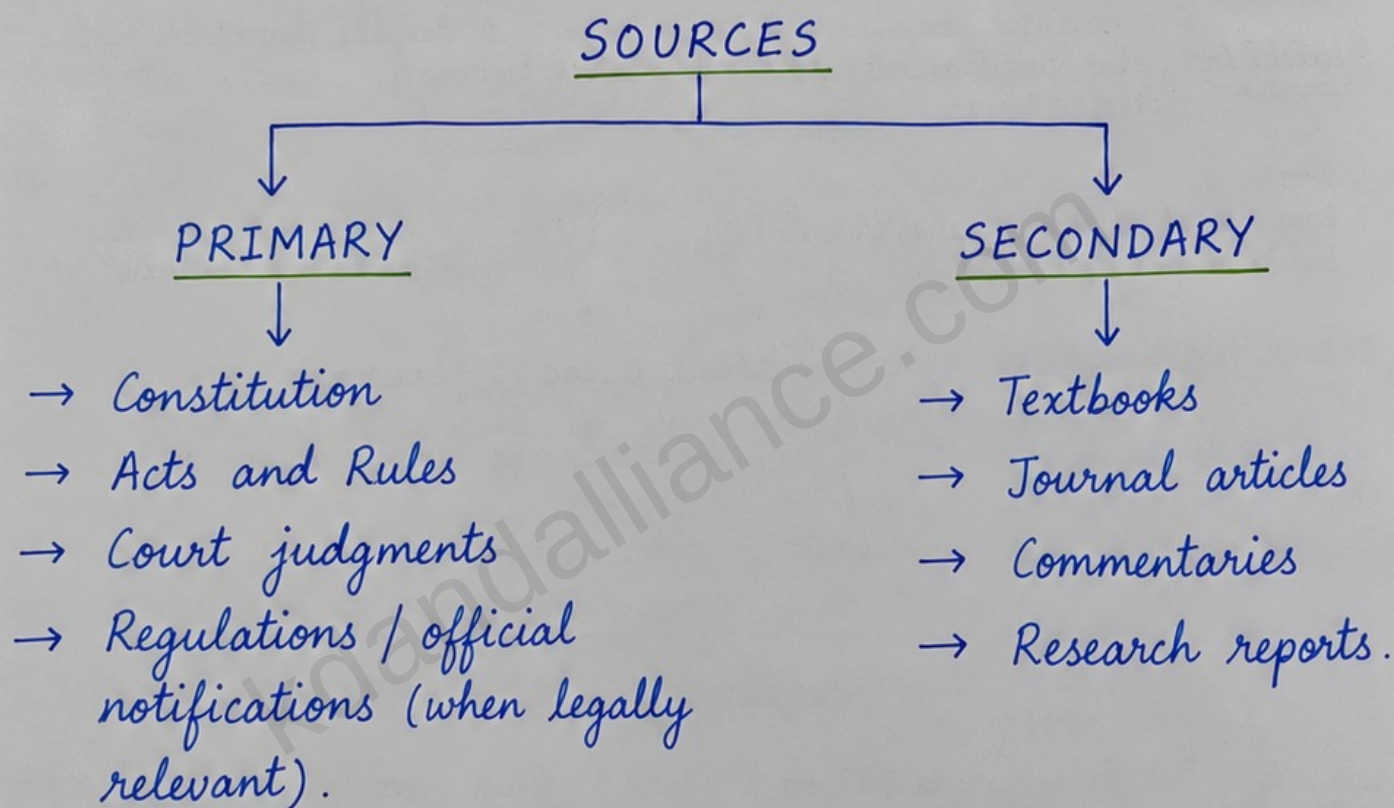


Remember → Research matters in courts, contracts, policy and academic writing.

SOURCES OF LEGAL RESEARCH

Q - Where do we find law?

We find law from different sources. We read and use these sources to know what the law is.



Remember → Primary = law itself ;
Secondary = explanations about law.

Example → For freedom of speech, read Article 19 and court cases first. Use a textbook to understand them.

Note: A blog is not the same as a binding law.

HOW TO CHECK A RELIABLE SOURCE

Q - Is every search result correct?

No. Always verify.

CHECKLIST :

- ① Who published it?
- ② What is the date?
- ③ Is it the latest version?
- ④ Can I open the original Act or judgment?
- ⑤ Does it really answer my question?

Good places to begin :

- Official legislature / gazette websites.
- Court websites.
- Legal databases.
- Library books.

Example :

A news article mentions a judgment.
Find and read the judgment itself.

Important :



Do not invent section numbers, cases, quotations or page numbers.



Original
Act /
Judgment



News
article

RESEARCH TECHNIQUES - PLAN FIRST

Q - How to begin a legal research project?

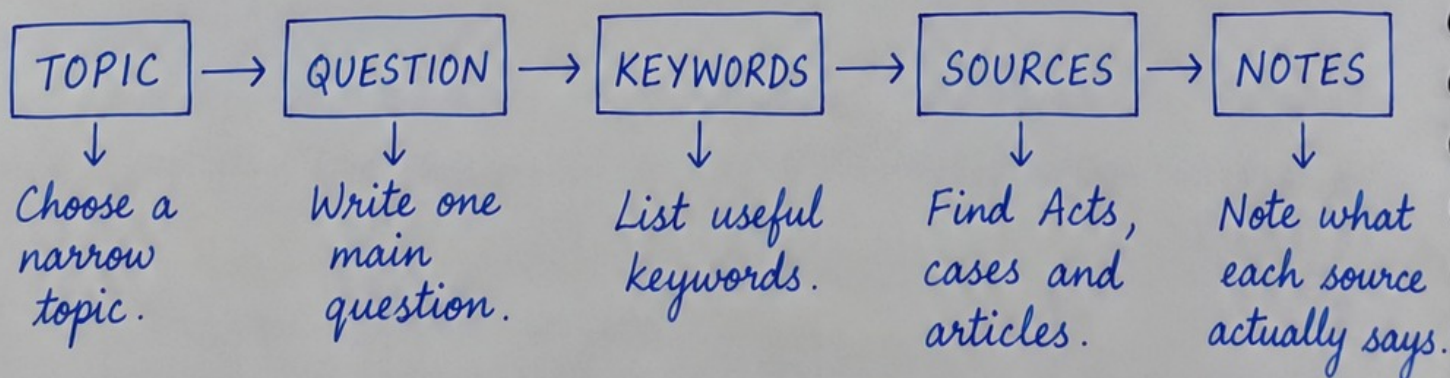
Follow these 5 simple steps:

- ① Choose a narrow topic.
- ② Write one main question.
- ③ List useful keywords.
- ④ Find Acts, cases and articles.
- ⑤ Note what each source actually says.

Example topic: Free legal aid in India.

Main question: Why do some people not receive legal aid?

Keywords: legal aid, awareness, access, India.

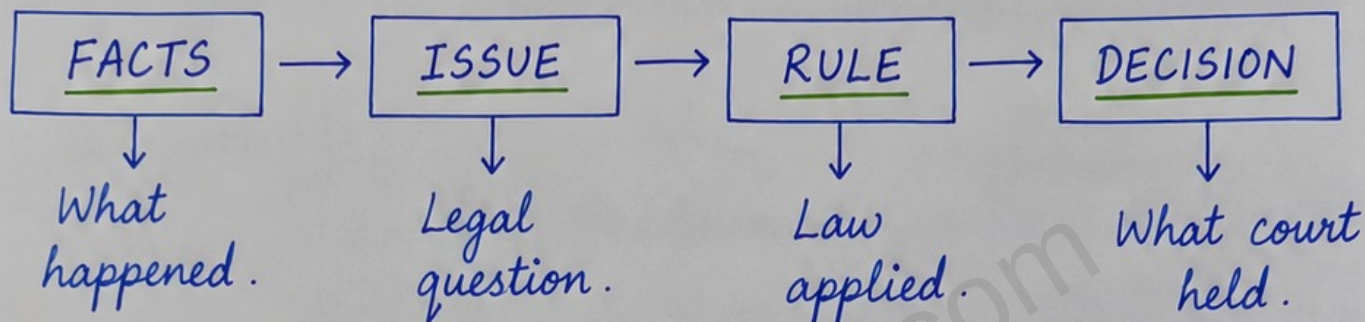


Remember: Keep source links and full details from the start.

HOW TO READ A JUDGMENT & WRITE NOTES

Q - What to look for in a judgment?

Read every judgment with a simple 4-step structure:



Reasoning = why the court decided so.

Remember:
F - I - R - D

Q - How to make case notes?

For each case, note the following:

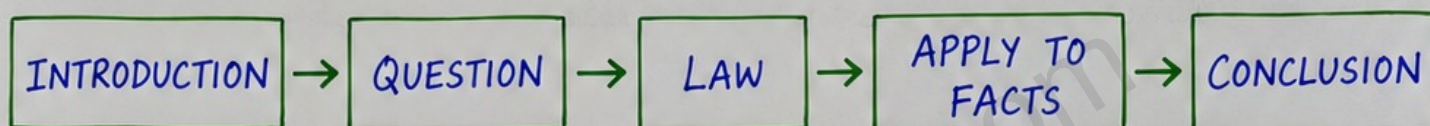
- ① Case name - name of the case.
- ② Court - which court decided it.
- ③ Year - when it was decided.
- ④ Key facts - main facts in short.
- ⑤ Legal rule - Law applied by the court.
- ⑥ Useful paragraph - important lines (with page/para no.).

Note: Do not copy a sentence without checking and citing its source.

HOW TO WRITE CLEAR LEGAL ANSWERS

Q - What is legal writing?

Explaining a legal question clearly with facts, rules, reasons and sources.

Structure of a Legal AnswerTips for Clear Legal Writing

- ① Use short sentences.
- ② Define difficult words.
- ③ Separate facts from opinion.
- ④ Support claims with sources.
- ⑤ Do not exaggerate the result.

Example

✗ Do not write: "The law always protects buyers."

✓ Instead write: "The available remedy depends on the facts and law."

Note: Clarity matters more than fancy words.

CITATIONS & FOOTNOTES - EASY NOTES

Q - What is a citation?

A citation tells the reader where a rule, fact or idea came from.

Q - What is a footnote?

A small numbered note at the bottom of a page that tells the source.

Example:

Equality before law is a Fundamental Right¹.

1. Constitution of India, art. 14.

Q - What is a pinpoint?

The exact page, paragraph or section supporting your point.

How to cite (general format):

ACT: Name of Act + section / article.

CASE: Name of case + report citation + paragraph if available.

BOOK: Author + title + publication details + page if relevant.

ARTICLE: Author + title + journal details + page if relevant.

Q - Why cite?

So others can check your work and you give proper credit.

Remember: Use the citation style your teacher asks for.

Check every section number, quotation and pinpoint.

BIBLIOGRAPHY & UNIT IV REVISION

Q - What is a bibliography?

A list of sources used, usually at the end of the assignment.

Footnote

= source next to a particular claim.

Bibliography

= full list of sources at the end.

Q - What should a bibliography include?

- Author (name of the writer).
- Title (name of the book, article or website).
- Publication details (publisher, journal, etc.).
- Year (when it was published).
- Link if online (URL).

Q - What is plagiarism?

Using someone else's work as your own without proper credit.

Quick revision - Key points from Unit IV

Legal research	→	find & check law.
Doctrinal	→	books and cases.
Non-doctrinal	→	real-life data (e.g. interviews, surveys).
Primary	→	Acts and judgments.
Secondary	→	commentary (textbooks, journal articles).
Footnote	→	identify source (next to a claim).
Bibliography	→	all sources listed at the end.

Practice Questions

- ① What is doctrinal research?
- ② Give two primary sources.
- ③ Why do we cite?

END OF UNIT IV