

Washington University Law

Optional Reading List

Often students will ask what they should read to prepare for law school. While we encourage students to read for pleasure, the following is a list of books suggested by law school faculty and administrators.

Law Study and Law School

Academic Legal Writing: Law Review Articles, Student Notes, Seminar Papers, and Getting on Law Review by Eugene Volokh

The Bramble Bush by Karl Llewellyn

Getting to Maybe: How to Excel on Law School Exams by Richard Michael Fischl

Introduction to the Study & Practice of Law by Kenney Hegland

The Language of Law School: Learning to “Think Like a Lawyer” by Elizabeth Mertz

Law, Law Study, and the Lawyer’s Role by James Moliterno and Fredric Ira Lederer

Law School Without Fear: Strategies for Success by Helene Shapo and Marshall Shapo

[Surviving Legal De-Education: An Outsider’s Guide](#) by Ann Scales

Thinking Like a Lawyer: A New Introduction to Legal Reasoning by Frederick Schauer

Legal Cases and Practicing Law

Confessions of a Criminal Lawyer by S. Wishman

The Buffalo Creek Disaster by Gerald Stern

A Civil Action by Jonathan Harr

A Crime of Self-Defense by George Fletcher

The End of Obscenity by Charles Rembar

Gideon’s Trumpet by Anthony Lewis

The Lawyers by Martin Mayer

My Life in Court by Louis Nizer

Simple Justice by Richard Kluger

Unequal Justice by J. Auerbach

Unlikely Heroes by Jack Bass

Women In Law by C.F. Epstein

Historical

The American Judicial Tradition by G. Edward White

The American Supreme Court by Robert McClosky

East West Street by Philippe Sands

A History of American Law by Lawrence Friedman

The Least Dangerous Branch by Alexander Bickel

Major Legal Systems of the World by David & Brierley

My Beloved Word by Sonia Sotomayor

Notorious RBG: The Life and Times of Ruth Bader Ginsburg by Irin Carmon and Shana Knizhnik

Tyranny on Trial by Whitney R. Harris

Theoretical

Anatomy of the Law by Lon Fuller

The Death of Contract by Grant Gilmore

Introduction to Legal Reasoning by Edward Hirsh Levi

The Nature of the Judicial Process by Benjamin Cardozo

The Power and Purpose of International Law by Mary Ellen O'Connell

The Spirit of the Common Law by Roscoe Pound