

Legislation - How to...

How to search for Acts on a specific topic

There are a few ways you can find legislation on a subject...

1. use a secondary source
2. browse a subject index to legislation
3. search legislation websites

Use a secondary source

Secondary sources are an excellent resource to quickly learn of Acts that regulate an area of law.

Legal encyclopaedias

Search or browse for the relevant section, then look at the footnotes for references to Acts.

[Halsbury's laws of Australia](#) Comprehensive, continuously updated legal encyclopedia covering all areas of law in Australia.

[Laws of Australia](#) Comprehensive, continuously updated legal encyclopedia covering all areas of law and every Australian jurisdiction. Covers legislation, case law, commentary, journals, news and precedents.

Books

[Search for books using FindIt@Flinders](#)

Commentary services

[Subject list of commentary services](#)

Browse a subject index

Commonwealth

Wicks subject index to Commonwealth legislation. In the Law Library (row 39)

South Australia

[Subject Index to South Australian Legislation](#)

All Australian jurisdictions

[LawOne - browse by subject area](#)

Includes both Acts and Regulations

[Lawlex](#)

Click on 'Browse Legislation'

Search legislation websites

Government or Parliamentary Legislation Websites (see links to Acts from each jurisdiction).

[LawOne](#)

Click on 'Advanced Search'

Can search by keyword or phrase, within the title or text of Acts

[AustLII](#)

Click on 'Advanced Search' and choose to search over:

- * All Legislation
- * All Legislation - for a particular jurisdiction
- * Consolidated Acts - for a particular jurisdiction

Finding Acts and Bills

[Find the current version of an Act](#)

[Search for Acts on a topic](#) (i.e. that regulate an area of law)

[Find similar Acts for all Australian jurisdictions](#)

[Search for information to help interpret an Act](#)

[Find Acts as made \(sessional, numbered Acts\)](#)

[Find commencement dates](#)

[Check how an Act applied at a particular point in time](#) (backdating)



[Find Bills](#)

[Search for Bills on a topic](#) (e.g. to check for recent and upcoming amendments)

[Find and search for delegated legislation](#)

[Search for words and phrases defined in legislation](#)

[Search for cases that refer to or judicially considered an Act](#)

Task	Resources	Tips
Find the current version of an Act	SA SA Legislation website	Usually updated at the same time
	Law Library Legislation Collection	Acts with this logo are authorised 
	Cth Federal Register of Legislation	Acts with this logo are authorised 
	All AustLII	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Select the jurisdiction 2. Choose 'Consolidated Acts' Check the 'Notes' to see when the Act was last updated
Search for Acts on a topic (i.e. that regulate an area of law)	SA Subject Index to South Australian Legislation	
	SA Legislation website	Used Advanced Search and select: *Category - 'Acts' *Version - 'Current'
	Cth Wick's Subject Index to Commonwealth Legislation	Print Only Located in the Commonwealth Legislation collection
	All Secondary sources	
	LawOne	Can 'Browse by subject area'
	All AustLII	Use Advanced Search to find 'Consolidated Acts' Australia-wide or from a jurisdiction
Find similar Acts for all Australian jurisdictions	Legal encyclopaedias Halsbury's Laws of Australia Laws of Australia	If you already know of an Act from one jurisdiction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • search for the name of that Act • look at the footnotes or surrounding paragraphs for details of similar Acts for other Australian jurisdictions If you do not already know of an Act, you can search or browse either encyclopaedia by topic. Once you find a relevant paragraph on the topic, look at the footnotes for a list of Acts.
Search for information to help interpret an Act	SA Hansard via SA Parliament website	Use Text Search Search for the name of the Bill in quotation marks Sort results by date

	Hansard in print	Look up the Bill in the index (at the front of each volume)
Cth	EM via Federal Register of Legislation	EM located on Bill homepage
	EM via Parliament of Australia website	See below for search tips
	Hansard via Parliament of Australia website	Use Advanced Search and select 'Hansard' under House of Representatives or Senate Search for the name of the Bill in quotation marks
All	EM and second reading speech via LawOne	Links to these are listed under 'Additional Information' on the Bill homepage
	Parliamentary websites	
Find Acts as made (sessional, numbered Acts)	SA SA Legislation website	Look at list of 'Acts enacted'
	Acts of the Parliament of South Australia 1837-2002	
	Cth Federal Register of Legislation	Click on 'Acts - As made A-Z' Can browse by title or year
	All	AustLII
LawOne		1. Select the jurisdiction 2. Chose 'Acts' under 'Legislation by year and number'
In print		1. Look for volumes labelled 'Acts' or 'Statutes' that are organised by year 2. Get the volume for the year the Act was passed 3. Look up the Act by Act number or use the title index
Find commencement dates	<p>Check the legislative history of the Principal Act.</p> <p>If not listed, check the commencement section of the Act - may be</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *a date specified in the Act *Royal assent -> check Government Gazette or an index to Bills * a date to be fixed by proclamation -> check Government Gazette (SA also has proclamations on SA Legislation website) <p>If no commencement date is specified, check the provisions that regulate commencement under the Acts Interpretation Act of the jurisdiction</p>	

Check how an Act applied at a particular point in time (backdating)	SA	SA Legislation website	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Find the current Act 2. Look at the "Historical" version that encompasses the date you are interested in
	Cth	Federal Register of Legislation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Find the current Act 2. Click on 'View Series' for superseded compilations
	All	AustLII	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Select the jurisdiction 2. Choose 'Acts (Point-in-time)'
Find Bills	SA	SA Legislation website	
	Cth	Federal Register of Legislation	1996 - Can browse by title or year
		Parliament of Australia website - ParInfo Search	1990 - See below for search tips
	All	AustLII	
		LawOne	Browse by year OR Find the Act - the 'Details' link shows the originating Bill Includes progress notes
Search for Bills on a topic (e.g. to check for recent and upcoming amendments)	SA	Index to Bills (via SA Parliament website)	
		SA Legislation website	Use Advanced Search and choose type 'Bills'. Search for the name of the Act you wish to check for amendments to
	Cth	Parliament of Australia website - ParInfo Search	See below for search tips
		Federal Register of Legislation	Use Advanced Search and choose type 'Bills'
	All	AustLII	
		LawOne	See above for tips
Find and search for delegated legislation	SA	SA Legislation website	<p>If you want to find delegated legislation made under a certain Act</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • find the Act • look at the list of subordinate legislation (toward the bottom of the page)

	Cth	Federal Register of Legislation	If you you want to find delegated legislation made under a certain Act <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • find the Act • click on 'View Series' • click on 'Enables'
	All	LawOne	If you want to find delegated legislation made under a certain Act <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • find the Act • click on 'Subordinate Legislation'
		Statute annotators	List all Acts for a jurisdiction. Lists subordinate legislation under each enabling Act
Search for words & phrases defined in legislation	All	Australian Legal Words	Can search or browse Browsing may reveal alternate terms
Search for cases that refer to or judicially considered an Act	All	CaseBase	Use the 'Act/Regulation' box Use w/p to include the jurisdiction (civil liability w/p sa) Use ! to search for all subsections (31!)
		FirstPoint	Use the 'Legislation Cited' box Use * to search for all subsections (31*)
		AustLII	Use the 'Noteup' link from * the Act homepage * the individual section

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