## How Cases are Published and Cited

### Unreported judgments
Judgments from the superior courts initially appear on the internet, often on the same day as the decision is handed down (e.g. those from the High Court). **AustLii** ([www.austlii.edu.au](http://www.austlii.edu.au)) is a repository of cases from courts and tribunals in their initial, “unreported” form. Unreported judgments are linked via the **Cases on the Internet** sub tab (under the **Cases** tab) on the **Law Resources Library guide** ([guides.lib.monash.edu/law](http://guides.lib.monash.edu/law)).

A medium neutral citation (MNC) is assigned by the Court to each unreported judgment. MNCs make no reference to the title of a case reporting series (e.g. Commonwealth Law Reports); rather they refer to the court in which the case is heard:

**Hogan v Hinch [2011] HCA 4**

*Parties [Year of decision] Court abbreviation Sequential judgment number*

Reading the above citation, we know that the matter of Hogan and Hinch was the 4th judgment to be handed down by the High Court of Australia in 2011.

### Reported judgments
Law reports are the published court judgments, published by a commercial legal publisher, eg LexisNexis, Thomson Reuters, CCH, or by a Council of Law Reporting (e.g the Law Reports (UK) are published by the the Incorporated Council of Law Reporting, ICLR). These can be print or online, and include added features such as Catchwords and Headnotes.

Each law report series has a unique title. Some specialise in reporting particular types of cases e.g. tax cases or tort cases, while others report cases of a particular court. See the **Online law reports** sub tab (under the **Cases** tab) on the **Law Resources Library Guide**.

Not all judgments are reported: only judgments which contain significant points of law are considered to be valuable precedents. However, the same judgment is often reported in more than one law report series.

Reported cases are **authoritative** and should be used in preference to the unreported judgment. **Authorised law reports** contain judgments which have been verified by the judge or an associate. If a case has been reported in an authorised series **always prefer the authorised version**. See the **Authorised law reports** sub tab (under the **Cases** tab) on the **Law Resources Library guide**.

### Citation - Round and Square Brackets
To effectively find reported cases in their print version on the Library shelves, it is helpful to understand the distinction between citations using **round** and **square** brackets. Law reports which produce sequentially numbered volumes, where identifying the volume number is more important than knowing the year, use **round brackets** e.g. **Vigolo v Bostin (2005) 221 CLR 191**.

Law report series where the date, or year of publication, is important for the purpose of identification (usually no volume number of volumes beginning with vol 1 each year), enclose the year in **square brackets** e.g. **R v Ryan and Walker [1966] VR 553**.

If you are citing from cases found online, copy the bracket you see in the citation.

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