

Legal dictionaries

What are legal dictionaries?

There are two types of dictionaries used in law.

- **Legal dictionaries** define and explain legal terminology
- **Legal words and phrases** tell you where you can find a legal definition of a word or phrase

Why should I use a legal dictionary?

- Can help you understand the terminology used in legal resources
- Can help you identify new terminology - this is really useful when you search for further information (e.g. journal articles on AGIS, judgments on CaseBase, etc.)
- Can help you determine how a subject is classified - e.g. does trespass to land come under criminal law, property law, or torts? This is really useful when researching a legal issue and you want to find a book that would cover the topic, or browse the subjects in a legal encyclopaedia

Which legal dictionary should I use?

- Two useful, concise legal dictionaries are:
 - **Australian Law Dictionary** (Oxford University Press, 2nd ed, 2013) at KL40 A938.M.2
 - LexisNexis Concise Australian Legal Dictionary (LexisNexis, 5th ed, 2015) at KL40 B988.C.5
- A more comprehensive legal dictionary is:
 - **Encyclopaedic Australian Legal Dictionary** (LexisNexis) online [here](#)

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