

Sample Briefs, Motions, and Pleadings

Note: The complete materials identify additional websites in this section.

Sample briefs, motions, and pleadings are easily found on the web. The real question is how to find high quality samples that address your legal issues. Listed below are useful websites (in alphabetical order) for finding sample appellate briefs, trial briefs, motions, and pleadings.

If you cannot find a relevant document, try searching the websites of law libraries, bar associations, and non-profit advocacy groups. Using Google's advance search function, you can limit a search to specific websites (*e.g.*, "americanbar.org") or specific domains (*e.g.*, ".edu" sites).

Advanced Search

Then narrow your results
by...

language:	<input type="text" value="any language"/>
region:	<input type="text" value="any region"/>
last update:	<input type="text" value="anytime"/>
site or domain:	<input type="text" value=".edu"/>

American Bar Association

http://www.americanbar.org/publications/preview_home.html

The ABA has a database of appellate briefs filed in the United States Supreme Court from the 2003-04 term to the present. The briefs are not arranged by topic and cannot be searched. Instead, the briefs are organized by date and Court term. For each case, you can download all merit briefs filed by the petitioner and respondent and many amicus briefs.

Baron & Budd Brief Bank

<http://baronandbudd.com/brief-bank>

This plaintiff's firm specializes in personal injury and products liability claims. Its trial and appellate briefs are posted on its website and can be browsed by type of case.

Federal Public Defenders

<http://dc.fd.org/briefbank.htm>

<http://dc.fd.org/motions/alaska.htm>

This office has posted motions and briefs that were drafted and filed by federal public defenders from various districts. The documents are organized by subject matter, so you can easily find a sample motion or brief that covers your issue.

Mayer Brown Briefs

<http://www.appellate.net/briefs>

This well-known defense firm has posted online its appellate briefs from federal and state courts. You can arrange the briefs by author or subject matter. And your browser's "find" tool will enable you to locate the type of brief that you are drafting (*e.g.*, initial brief or reply brief).

RECAP

<http://archive.recapthelaw.org>

RECAP is an innovative—and free—alternative to the federal courts' official online retrieval system, PACER. For each filed document you download on PACER, you are charged a fee. RECAP, however, makes some of those documents free. RECAP collects documents through its users. Any person accessing PACER with Firefox or Google Chrome can install a browser extension called RECAP. For each document the person purchases from PACER, RECAP will automatically copy it and send it to the RECAP database. The document is then available to the public to download for free.

Not surprisingly, the coverage is unpredictable because RECAP maintains only those documents that another user has downloaded with the RECAP browser extension. But it is still a good source to find briefs, motions, and pleadings that have been filed in federal district courts (and better than Justia). In addition, if you install RECAP on your browser and are on the PACER site, RECAP will notify you of any documents available for free from the RECAP archive.

As shown below, you can search dockets by keywords, court, case name, and date, but you cannot search the full text of filed documents.

∨ Advanced Search [Search Tips](#)

Court

Docket number

Case name

Pacer case number

Date filed *Date range*

Date terminated *Date range*

Date last filing *Date range*