

## Legal Research in a Nutshell, 12th

By Morris L. Cohen and Kent C. Olson. (2016) 357 pages, ISBN: 978-1-63460-468-8. \$45.00

**Subject:** Teaching legal research

**Useful for:** Useful for legal research instructors who desire a concise, easy-to-understand textbook or guide for their courses.

**Format:** Chapters with appendixes and indices.

### Reviewer's Comments:

In law school, I would often consult West Academic's Nutshell Series on any particular subject matter for quick, easy-to-understand guidance when I was unable to grasp a topic from class. Later, when teaching legal research to first year law students I would often refer students to the Nutshell Series book specific to legal research to help them better comprehend things we may have covered in class. The quick, easy-to-understand guidance that the Nutshell Series provides to torts, contracts, and other courses can just as easily be found for the topic of legal research. Now in its twelfth edition, Cohen and Olson's Legal Research in a Nutshell remains a highly sought after how-to guide when learning the ins and outs of the legal research process.

Divided into ten chapters, the text covers a wide variety of topics from case law and statutory law to international law and the law of foreign countries. An additional feature of each chapter, when it is relevant, is the inclusion of information on state-specific research. While the main focus of most legal research courses and of this book remains the research process of federal materials, the authors here do make note of the best practices in performing state-specific legal research. Also included is an exhaustive appendix of state research guides for each of the fifty states that can be used as an extra resource to consult in the research process.

Anyone who teaches legal research or who provides reference services to those performing their own legal research should consult this book. Written by top experts in the field, Legal Research in a Nutshell presents its material in a succinct, easy-to-understand manner that will not confuse the reader. Its language is written in a way that both the seasoned researcher and the research novice can understand and comprehend. The only concern this reviewer would have of this book is its lack of illustrations. Visual learners will not find any illustrations within this book detailing specifically how to perform certain research methods. However, the authors do provide illustrations on a companion Web site and strongly encourage readers to consult it when reading through the book.

**Reviewed by:** Stephen Parks, State Law Library of Mississippi, in 2017.