

General Principles of Legal Research

By Marc Silverman. 39 Legal Reference Serv. Q. 243 (2020).

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Reviewer's Summary:

In this article, Silverman lists and describes 24 general principles of legal research. He begins his second-year research course by handing out a list of 40 of these principles, in an attempt to provide students with something like a list of black letter research rules. "Take detailed notes," "begin with secondary sources," and "always read the definition section of a statute" are among the principles listed. Each principle also provides a rationale explaining why the principle is important to the research process. The principles listed will be familiar to most researchers; the benefit here is having them listed and succinctly explained. The author also describes real-world examples he shares with his students, which illustrate his principles, though he does not provide citations to these sample cases.

Summarized by: Jill A. Sturgeon, University of Colorado-Boulder, Wise Law Library in 2021.