



LAW DICTIONARY



Law is a code that regulates the behaviour of members of a society. It affects almost everything we do - buying a house, getting a job, and making a will or getting divorced, for example.

Even something as simple as buying a bar of chocolate is covered by numerous laws:

- The law of contract;
- Company law;
- Sale of goods, food and drugs legislation;
- Occupiers' liability;
- Trade's descriptions law!

So we can imagine how important it is for a common man to know the meaning of Law and its implications in one's life.

A Law Dictionary is a dictionary that is designed and compiled to give information about terms used in the field of law.

Here are some of the *meanings* of the terminologies used in field of Law.

Abatement = Removal or stopping of a nuisance.

Ab initio = Latin phrase meaning 'from the beginning'.

Abjure = To swear not to bear allegiance to another country.

Abscond = To go away without permission or not to return to the court after being released on bail or to escape from prison.

Actus Reus= Latin phrase meaning 'Guilty Act', Act which is forbidden by the Criminal Law, one of the two elements of a crime.

Ad Idem = Latin phrase meaning 'in Agreement.'

Adjourn = To stop a meeting for a period, to put off a legal hearing to the later date.

Ad Litem = Latin phrase meaning 'referring to the case at Law'

Guardian ad Letem = Person who acts on behalf of a minor who is a defendant in a court case.

Ad valorem = Latin phrase meaning 'according to value'.

Alieni Juris = Latin phrase meaning 'of another's right'. A person (such as minor) who has a right under the authority of a guardian.

Amicus Curiae = Latin phrase meaning 'friend of the court': Lawyer who does not represent a party in a case but who is called upon to address the court to help clear up a difficult legal point or to explain something which is in the public interest.

Ante = Latin adverb meaning 'which has taken place earlier' or 'before'.

Status Quo Ante = the situation as it was before.

A posteriori = Latin phrase meaning 'from what has been concluded afterwards'.

A posteriori argument = Argument based on observation.

Affidavit = written statement which is signed & sworn before a solicitor and which can then be used as evidence in court hearings.

Animus = Intention.

Animus cancellandi = the intention to cancel.

Animus Furandi = Intention to steal.

Animus Manendi = Intention to stay (in a place)

Animus Revocandi = Intention to revoke (A will)

Annul = To cancel or to stop something having a legal effect.

Appeal = Asking a higher court to change a decision of a lower court.

Arson = Notifiable offence of setting fire to a building.

Audi Alteram Partem = Latin phrase meaning 'Hear the other side': A rule in natural justice that everyone has the right to speak in his own defence and to have the case against him explained to him.

Automatism = Defence to a criminal charge whereby the accused states he acted involuntarily.

Autopsy = Examination of a dead person to see what was the cause of death.

Autrefois Acquit = French phrase meaning 'previously acquitted'. Plea that an accused person has already been acquitted of the crime with which he is charged.

Autrefois Convict = French phrase meaning 'previously convicted'. Plea that an accused person has already been convicted of the crime with which he is now charged .

Aver = To make a statement or an allegation in pleadings.

Attorn = To transfer.

Asylum = Hospital for people who are mentally ill.

Arm's length = Not closely connected, to deal with someone at arm's length = To deal as if there were no connections between the parties.

Appurtenant = To or belonging to.

Antedate = To put an earlier date o a document.

Amnesty = Pardon, often for political crimes, given to several people at he same time.

Alimony = Money which a court orders a husband to pay regularly to his separated or divorced wife.

Adjoin = To touch another property.

Accretion = Enlargement of a piece of land by natural causes.

Accredited = (Agent) who is appointed by a company to act on its behalf.

Alienation = Transfer of property to someone else.

A fortiori = Latin phrase meaning 'for a stronger reason

Affray = Public fight which frightens other people

Aggrieved = Who has been damaged/ harmed by a defendant's actions

Autarchy = Situation where a state has total power over itself & rules itself without outside interference

Autarky = Situation where a state is self-sufficient & can provide all its needs without outside help.

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