<u>**Search Instructions**</u>

This website offers a simple, basic search tool. It follows typical Boolean methodology, but is not as powerful as some other search tools.
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<u>**Template**</u>

The template is set up to offer the most commonly used search fields. Specific instructions for each field are below. If two or more fields contain information, all the criteria must be met. If you encounter difficulty in finding cases, try reducing the search criteria.

Neutral Citation
This search engine only permits searches of neutral citations. You cannot use this to search using other legal or commercial citations (e.g. S.C.R., D.L.R., B.C.L.R., Quicklaw or eCarswell).

To search using neutral citations you must enter a full neutral citation, e.g. 2008 BCCA 101. It is not necessary to use " " around the citation, and it is not case-sensitive (so both 2008 BCCA 101 and 2008 bcca 101 will work). You must have a space between each element: *2008bcca101* will not work. Do not use periods in the citation: *2008 B.C.C.A. 101* will not work.

Case Name (style of cause)
A case may be found by its name (style of cause). Both *White and Black* and *White v. Black* can be used. However, the form *White v. Black* must be exactly correct. If the case is *White and Red v. Blue and Black*, the search *White v. Black* will not work. The search *White and Black* will find the example.

It is not necessary to put " " around a search in this field. Thus, *White and Black* is preferable to "*White and Black*".

Keywords
This field allows you to search the body of full text of the judgment. Type in the terms (keywords) that you wish to find, using the Boolean operators available. Note that only a limited selection of Boolean operators are functional on this site (see below).

For example, you can search:
> *car* AND *theft*
> *car* OR *theft*
> *car w/10 theft*
> "*car theft*"
> *car** and *theft**

Judgment Date
This allows you to search for cases by date. It is not necessary to use full year/month/day information; a year alone is sufficient.

To find a case in a range of dates, e.g. between January 1, 2008, and December 31, 2008, you would enter:

Judgment Date From 2008/01/01   To 2008/12/31
(mm/dd optional)   yyyy/mm/dd   yyyy/mm/dd

To find a case of a specific date, use only the "From" box and enter the desired date, e.g.:

Judgment Date From 2008/01/01   To [   ]
(mm/dd optional)   yyyy/mm/dd   yyyy/mm/dd

Judge/Master/Registrar
Cases may be searched by name of the decision-maker (judge, master or registrar). As letters are typed into this field, a drop-down menu will appear to suggest names. A minimum of 2 characters is needed to activate this feature.

Court Registry/Docket Number
The court registry number or docket number is the unique number assigned to each case on commencement by the commencement registry. Note that difficulties can arise from confusion between zero and the letter "O". Also, some registry/docket numbers contain placeholder zeroes. Thus, for example CA012345 and CA12345 may appear on various documents, so it may be necessary to search both versions.

Registry Location
Cases may be searched by registry location. Generally, the registry location is the city of the court in which the case was commenced. However, some cases are moved from one registry to another during the course of proceedings, and sometimes a judgment is issued out of a registry other than the commencement registry.

<u>Search Syntax</u>

Use of search syntax permits you to make more precise queries.

Exclusion of common words
The search engine ignores many common words, such as *the*, *a*, *of*, *with*, whether used individually or within a phrase.

Capital letters/Lower case
The search is case insensitive, therefore the use of upper or lower case has no effect on the results. However, the words AND, OR, NOT typed in all-upper case are treated as operators.

Searches without operators
The search engine treats a space between search terms as a phrase (explained below). Thus, the search *car theft* is treated as "*car theft*" not as *car and theft* nor as *car or theft*.

Parentheses
Parentheses are not recognized and will not alter the order of operations.

Wildcard Search (*)
Asterisks (*) can be used as a wildcard character and can replace zero, one, or more characters at the start, middle, end of a word. For instance, *specially will find specially and especially; w*ind will find wand, wind, and westbound; and wonder** will find wonder, wonders, wonderfully.

Phrase Search (" ")
To search for an exact phrase, type the phrase within quotation marks, for example: "*high stakes poker*". Common words (the, of, a) are ignored but are treated as a mere placeholder. Thus "*time of the season*" actually finds "*time*" and "*season*" separated by any two words.

AND, OR, AND NOT
To combine or exclude terms, use the AND, OR, and NOT operators, in capital letters, between your query terms, for example: *collision* AND truck, *collision* OR truck, collision AND NOT truck.

Proximity Search (w/n)
The only proximity operator recognized by this search engine is w/n, which finds the keywords within n terms from another (w/n). For instance, the query *accident w/3 pedestrian* will find judgments containing the word "*accident*" separated by three words or less from "*pedestrian*".

Results
The search results begin with a caption like this:

1. The number of results matching the query will be displayed at the top of the results list.

2. If the query did not return the desired results or any results at all, you can click the "*(Modify Search)*" link to return to the template to search again.

The results will be displayed in this format:

1. **The case name (style of cause) is a link to the published judgment.**

2. If full text search is used, a highlighted version of the judgment can be accessed by clicking the "highlighted" link on the right side. This will show the judgment with the search terms highlighted in yellow within the document. <u>Note: this option is only available for the keyword field</u>; search terms in other fields (e.g. date, registry location) will not be highlighted.

3. If there is a summary available, it will be displayed following the judgment details. If the summary is longer than the display area, click the "more…" link to display the rest. To hide the extended summary click "less…"

There will be maximum of 50 results displayed on the page at one time. If the query returns more then 50 you can view the others by moving to the different pages by clicking on the numbers at the bottom of the results list. The numbers will differ depending on the number of matching results. Also located at the bottom of the results list is a "TOP" link which will move the screen back to the search criteria section.