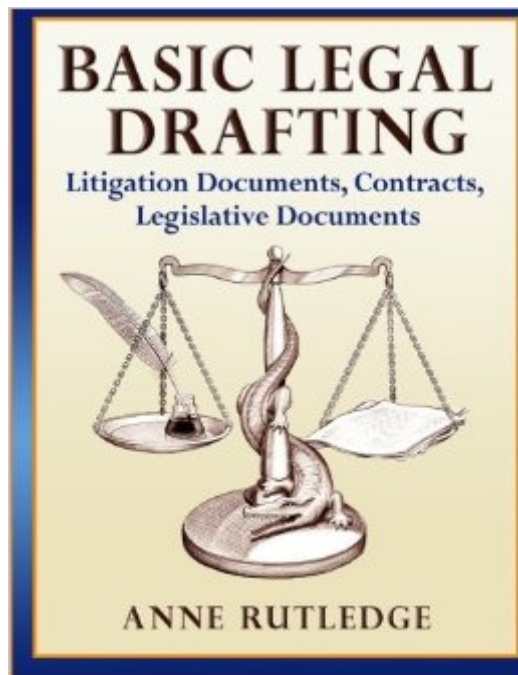


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# Basic Legal Drafting: Litigation Documents, Contracts, Legislative Documents



## Synopsis

BASIC LEGAL DRAFTING offers down-to-earth instruction on how to draft well-organized and clearly articulated legal documents. A culmination of twenty-five years of teaching in the highly regarded Legal Drafting Program at the University of Florida College of Law, the book is designed to be used as a resource for law students and practicing attorneys, as well as a textbook for drafting classes. The text is particularly strong in its discussions of how to organize a document, often the most difficult task facing a drafter and typically under-addressed in other drafting manuals. Equally useful are the very concrete recommendations on how to articulate the language of a document in order to achieve clarity and precision. The text helpfully distinguishes traditional drafting principles from common conventions and stylistic preferences. The litigation chapter addresses complaints, answers and motions. Useful examples range from a simple negligence complaint to a complex statutory-based multi-count complaint and appropriate responses. The contracts chapter includes an extensive discussion, with examples, on how to create for any contract a logical, coherent framework that underlines the drafter's (and presumably the client's) intentions. The chapter addresses in detail the articulation of particular provisions, including definitions, termination and exculpatory provisions. Its comprehensive discussion of how to recognize and avoid various types of ambiguity will prove useful beyond the contract drafting context. The legislation chapter identifies common legislative protocols and applies, within those protocols, many of the organization and articulation principles set out in the contracts chapter. While the text uses litigation documents, contracts and legislation as the bases for its discussions, Basic Legal Drafting offers practical, realistic advice and instructions that will be useful to the drafter of any type of legal document.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Basic Legal Drafting" is the ultimate "How To" book for anyone faced with the task of drafting a legal document. It answers all questions as to "What Do I Say and How Do I Say It." The text leads the reader step by step through the drafting process: how to think about the context of the document, how to determine the necessary content of the document, how to place the content into a logical framework, and how to use language skills to set out the content clearly and without ambiguity. The faculty members of the Legal Drafting Program at the University of Florida Levin College of Law have used the book for six semesters, and it is by far the best teaching tool we have encountered. Because the text covers all of the basics of effective drafting, students are better prepared when they come to class, and the discussion is more informed. Many questions can be answered simply by reference to specific pages of the text. Comments by students have been highly positive. They find the book to be "thorough", "readable", and "most helpful", and indicate it is the one book they intend to keep after graduation because it is the "most useful." The text is useful not only for the classroom, but also as a primer for law school graduates who have not had the benefit of a hands-on skills course such as Legal Drafting. It is also useful as a reference for even seasoned attorneys facing particular drafting dilemmas. "Basic Legal Drafting" is practical and to the point, and entirely user-friendly.

Very well organized. Elements are explained very carefully. An excellent resource, and for non-lawyers, an essential resource. One complaint: a little hard to find some of the important points made in the body of the text. It could be improved with more subdivisions.

As a law school legal drafting instructor and former practitioner, I find this textbood invaluable. Professor Rutledge's easy-to-read compilation of more than 20 years of lessons taught and learned captures the essentials of drafting clear, unambiguous, and well-organized documents. Each drafting principle is presented with a thorough explanation and helpful examples that provide excellent starting points for my students' weekly drafting assignments. I have more time in class to focus on the students' work products and I spend less class time on general explanations. Not only is the substance outstanding, the writing style is delightful and makes you feel as though you are in a very pleasant classroom environment. There is nothing dry or boring about this text, and my students actually give positive feedback about it! A reference students should take with them into the practice, I highly recommend it for instructors, students, and practitioners.

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