

Glossary of Latin Phrases and Maxims used in the Law

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Introduction

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Term or Phrase	Literal Translation	Definition and Use
<i>a fortiori</i>	from stronger	An <i>a fortiori</i> argument is an "argument from a stronger reason", meaning that, because one fact is true, a second (related and included) fact must also be true.
<i>a mensa et thoro</i>	from table and bed	Divorce <i>a mensa et thoro</i> indicates legal separation without legal divorce.
<i>a posteriori</i>	from later	An argument derived from subsequent event.
<i>a priori</i>	from earlier	An argument derived from previous event.
<i>a quo</i>	from which	Regarding a court below in an appeal, either a court of first instance or an appellate court, known as the court <i>a quo</i> .
<i>ab extra</i>	from outside	Concerning a case, a person may have received some funding from a 3rd party. This funding may have been considered <i>ab extra</i> .
<i>ab initio</i>	from the beginning	"Commonly used referring to the time a contract, statute, marriage, or deed become legal. e.g. The couple was covered <i>ab initio</i> by her health policy."
<i>absque hoc</i>	without this	"Presenting the negative portion of a plea when pleading at common by way a special traverse."
<i>Actori incumbit onus probatio</i>	on the plaintiff rests the proving	The burden of proof falls to the plaintiff, claimant, or petitioner according to Roman law .
<i>actus reus</i>	guilty act	Part of what proves criminal liability (with <i>mens rea</i>).
<i>ad coelum</i>	to the sky	Abbreviated from <i>Cuius est solum eius est usque ad coelum et ad infernos</i> which translates to "[for] whoever owns [the] soil, [it] is his all the way [up] to Heaven and [down] to Hell." The principle that the owner of a parcel of land also owns the air above and the ground below the parcel.
<i>ad colligenda bona</i>	to collect the goods	In English law, a grant <i>ad colligenda bona</i> is sometimes applied for by parties interested in the administration of a deceased person's estate.
<i>ad hoc</i>	for this	Generally, signifies a solution designed for a specific problem or task, non-generalizable, and not intended to be able to be adapted to other purposes.
<i>ad hominem</i>	at the person	Attacking an opponent's character rather than answering his argument.
<i>ad idem</i>	to the same thing	In agreement.
<i>ad infinitum</i>	to infinity	To continue forever.
<i>ad litem</i>	for the case	Describes those designated to represent parties deemed incapable of representing themselves, such as a child or incapacitated adult.
<i>ad quod damnum</i>	according to the harm	Used in tort law. Implies that the reward or penalty ought to correspond to the damage suffered or inflicted.
<i>ad valorem</i>	according to value	An <i>ad valorem</i> tax is a tax whose amount is based on the value of a transaction or of property. It is typically imposed at the time of a transaction, as in the case of a sales tax or value-added tax (VAT).
<i>adjournment sine die</i>	adjournment without a day	When an assembly adjourns without setting a date for its next meeting.
<i>affidavit</i>	he has sworn	A formal statement of fact.
<i>alter ego</i>	another I	A second identity living within a person.
<i>amicus curiae</i>	friend of the court	A person who offers information to a court regarding a case before it.

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animus contrahendi	contractual intent	Intention to contract.
animus nocendi	intention to harm	The subjective state of mind of the author of a crime, with reference to the exact knowledge of illegal content of his behaviour, and of its possible consequences.
animus possidendi	intention to possess	"In order to claim possessory rights, an individual must establish physical control of the res and the intention to possess (i.e. animus possidendi)"
animus revertendi	intention to return	"Wild animals, such as bees and homing pigeons, that by habit go 'home' to their possessor. Used when discussing <i>ferae naturae</i> ."
ante	before	"An antenuptial agreement is a contract between two people that is executed before marriage."
(in) arguendo	for the sake of argument	When arguing a point in court, or in an academic setting, using the phrase "assuming, arguendo, that ..." allows the individual to examine certain conclusions based on disputed facts, without making an admission that those facts are true.
Audi alteram partem	hear the other side	Refers to the idea that one cannot be fairly judged unless the cases for and against them have been heard.
bona fide	in good faith	Implies sincere good intention regardless of outcome.
bona vacantia	ownerless goods	'Bona Vacantia' means vacant goods and is the name given to ownerless property, which by law passes to the Crown.
Cadit quaestio	the question falls	Indicates that a settlement to a dispute or issue has been reached, and the issue is now resolved.
Casus belli	case of war	The justification for acts of war.
casus fortuitus	fortuitous event	<i>Force majeure</i> , specifically a man-made inevitable accident (e.g. riots, strikes, civil war). Compare <i>vis major</i> (see below).
Caveat	May he beware	When used by itself, refers to a qualification, or warning.
Caveat emptor	Let the buyer beware	In addition to the general warning, also refers to a legal doctrine wherein a buyer could not get relief from a seller for defects present on property which rendered it unfit for use.
Certiorari	to be apprised	A type of writ seeking judicial review.
Ceteris paribus	with other things the same	More commonly rendered in English as "All other things being equal."
cogitationis poenam nemo patitur	Nobody suffers punishment for mere intent	It means that no one is punished for merely thinking of a crime.
communio bonorum	community of property	The aggregate of marital property under a community property matrimonial regime
compensatio morae	balance of delay	Delay in payment or performance on the part of both the debtor and the creditor.
compos mentis	having command of mind	Of sound mind. Also used in the negative "Non compos mentis", meaning "Not of sound mind".
Conditio sine qua non	A condition without which it could not be	An indispensable and essential action, condition, or ingredient.
consensus ad idem	agreement to the same	Meeting of the minds, mutual assent, or concurrence of wills. Parties must be of one mind and their promises must relate to the same subject or object. Also, <i>consensus in idem</i> .
consensus facit	consensus makes the law	Stipulates that when two or more persons arrive at a good faith agreement, the

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legem		law will insist on that agreement being carried out.
consuetudo pro lege servatur	Custom is held as law	Where no laws apply to a given situation, the customs of the place and time will have the force of law.
contra	against	Used in case citations to indicate that the cited source directly contradicts the point being made.
contra bonos mores	against good morals	Contracts so made are generally illegal and unenforceable.
contra legem	against the law	Used when a court or tribunal hands down a decision that is contrary to the laws of the governing state.
Contradictio in adjecto	contradiction in itself	A contradiction in terms.
contra proferentem	against the one bringing forth	Used in contract law to stipulate that an ambiguous term in a contract shall be interpreted against the interests of the party that insisted upon the term's inclusion. Prevents the intentional additions of ambiguous terminology from being exploited by the party who insisted on its inclusion.
coram non iudice	before one who is not a judge	Refers to a legal proceeding without a judge, or with a judge who does not have proper jurisdiction.
corpus delicti	body of the crime	A person cannot be convicted of a crime, unless it can be proven that the crime was even committed.
corpus juris	body of law	The complete collection of laws of a particular jurisdiction or court.
corpus juris civilis	body of civil law	The complete collection of civil laws of a particular jurisdiction or court. Also sometimes used to refer to the Code of Justinian.
corpus juris gentium	body of the law of nations	The complete collection of international law.
corpus juris secundum	Second Body of the Law	An encyclopaedia of US law drawn from US Federal and State court decisions.
crimen falsi	crime of falsifying	Forgery.
cui bono	as a benefit to whom?	Suggests that the perpetrator(s) of a crime can often be found by investigating those who would have benefited financially from the crime, even if it is not immediately obvious.
cuius est solum eius est usque ad coelum et ad inferos	For whoever owns the soil, it is theirs up to Heaven and down to Hell	Used in reference to the rights of property owners to the air above, and land below, their property.
de bonis asportatis	carrying goods away	Specifies that larceny was taking place in addition to any other crime named. E.g. "trespass de bonis asportatis".
debellatio	warring down	Complete annihilation of a warring party, bringing about the end of the conflict.
de bonis non administratis	of goods not administered	Assets of an estate remaining after the death (or removal) of the designated estate administrator. An "administrator de bonis non administratis" will then be appointed to dispose of these goods.
de die in diem	from day to day	Generally, refers to a type of labor in which the worker is paid fully at the completion of each day's work.
de facto	in fact	Literally "from fact"; often used to mean something that is true in practice but has not been officially instituted or endorsed. "For all intents and purposes". Cf. <i>de jure</i> .
de futuro	concerning the future	At a future date.

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<i>de integro</i>	concerning the whole	Often used to mean "start it all over", in the context of "repeat de integro".
<i>de jure</i>	according to law	Literally "from law"; something that is established in law, whether or not it is true in general practice. Cf. <i>de facto</i> .
<i>de lege ferenda</i>	of the law as it should be	Used in the context of "how the law should be", such as for proposed legislation.
<i>de lege lata</i>	of the law as it is	Concerning the law as it exists, without consideration of how things should be.
<i>delegatus non potest delegare</i> (Alternatively, it can be stated <i>delegatus non potest delegare</i>)	That which has been delegated cannot delegate [further]	A principle in constitutional and administrative law that means in Latin that "no delegated powers can be further delegated."
<i>de minimis</i>	about the smallest things	Various legal areas concerning small amounts or small degrees.
<i>de minimis non curat lex</i>	The law does not concern itself with the smallest [things]	There must be a minimal level of substance or impact in order to bring a legal action.
<i>de mortuis nil nisi bonum</i>	Of the dead, [speak] nothing unless good	Social convention that it is inappropriate to speak ill of the recently deceased, even if they were an enemy.
<i>de novo</i>	anew	Often used in the context of "trial <i>de novo</i> " – a new trial ordered when the previous one failed to reach a conclusion.
<i>deorum injuriae diis curae</i>	The gods take care of injuries to the gods	Blasphemy is a crime against the State, rather than against God.
<i>dictum</i>	(thing) said	A statement given some weight or consideration due to the respect given the person making it.
<i>doli incapax</i>	incapable of guilt	Presumption that young children or persons with diminished mental capacity cannot form the intent to commit a crime.
<i>dolus specialis</i>	Specific deceit	Heavily used in the context of genocide in international law.
<i>domitae naturae</i>	tame by nature	Tame or domesticated animal. Also called <i>mansuetae naturae</i> . Opposite of <i>ferae naturae</i> (below)
<i>donatio mortis causa</i>	deathbed gift	The donor, contemplating imminent death, declares words of present gifting and delivers the gift to the donee or someone who clearly takes possession on behalf of the donee. The gift becomes effective at death but remains revocable until that time.
<i>dramatis personae</i>	persons of the drama	People who figure prominently in something (such as an event)
<i>dubia in meliorem partem interpretari debent</i>	Doubtful things should be interpreted in the best way	Often spoken as "to give the benefit of the doubt."
<i>duces tecum</i>	bring with you	A "subpoena duces tecum" is a summons to produce physical evidence for a trial.
<i>ei incumbit probatio qui dicit</i>	Proof lies on him who asserts.	The concept that one is innocent until proven guilty.
<i>eiusdem generis</i>	of the same class	Known as a "canon of construction", it states that when a limited list of specific things also includes a more general class, that the scope of that more general class shall be limited to other items more like the specific items in the list.
<i>eo nomine</i>	by that name	It is used in the context of sovereign immunity.

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erga omnes	towards all	Refers to rights or obligations that are owed <i>towards all</i> .
ergo	therefore	Hence, thus, it follows.
erratum	having been made in error	The plural is <i>errata</i> .
et al.	and others	Abbreviation of et alii , meaning "and others".
et cetera	and other things	Generally used in the sense of "and so forth".
et seq.	and the following things	Abbreviation of <i>et sequens</i> , meaning "and the following ones". Used in citations to indicate that the cited portion extends to the pages following the cited page.
et uxor	and wife	Usually used instead of naming a man's wife as a party in a case.
et vir	and husband	Usually used instead of naming a woman's husband as a party in a case.
ex aequo et bono	of equity and [the] good	Usually defined as "what is right and good." Used to describe the power of a judge or arbiter to consider only what is fair and good for the specific case, and not necessarily what the law may require. In courts, usually only done if all parties agree.
ex ante	of before	Essentially meaning "before the event", usually used when forecasting future events.
ex cathedra	from the chair	Where <i>chair</i> refers to authority or position. Authority derived from one's position.
ex concessis	from what has been conceded already	Often used in a "guilt by association" context.
ex delicto	from a transgression	The consequence of a crime or tort.
ex demissione	from a transgression	part of the title of the old action of ejection <i>Jones v. Doe ex dem. Smith</i>
ex facie	on the face	If a contract is blatantly and obviously incorrect or illegal, it can be considered void <i>ex facie</i> without any further analysis or arguments.
ex factis jus oritur	the law arises from the facts	A principle in international law that one must take facts on the ground into account when considering the legality of certain kinds of questions.
ex fida bona	good business norms	A judge is to make a judgement based on "good business norms". It means that the contractual parties shall keep their words, making it possible for both to trust each other. An agreement should be according to the branch-norms if not specifically mentioned.
ex gratia	by favor	Something done voluntarily and with no expectation of a legal liability arising therefrom.
ex injuria jus non oritur	Law does not arise from injustice.	A principle in international law that unjust acts cannot create laws.
ex officio	from the office	Something done or realized by the fact of holding an office or position.
ex parte	from [for] one party	A decision reached, or case brought, by or for one party without the other party being present.
ex post	from after	Based on knowledge of the past.
ex post facto	from a thing done afterward	Commonly said as "after the fact."
ex post facto law		A retroactive law. E.g. a law that makes illegal an act that was not illegal when it was done.
expressio unius est exclusio alterius	The express mention of one thing excludes all others.	When items are listed, anything not explicitly stated is assumed to not be included.

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<i>ex proprio motu</i>	by [one's] own motion	Commonly spoken as "by one's own accord."
<i>ex rel</i>	[arising] out of the narration [of the relator]	Abbreviation of <i>ex relatione</i> . Used when the government brings a case that arises from the information conveyed to it by a third party ("relator").
<i>ex turpi causa non oritur actio</i>	From a dishonorable cause an action does not arise.	A party cannot bring a legal action for consequences of his own illegal act.
<i>exempli gratia</i>	for the sake of example	Usually abbreviated "e.g.".
<i>ex tunc</i>	from then	Term used in contract law to specify terms that are voided or confirmed in effect from the execution of the contract. Cf. <i>ex nunc</i> .
<i>ex nunc</i>	from now on	Term used in contract law to specify terms that are voided or confirmed in effect only in the future and not prior to the contract, or its adjudication. Cf. <i>ex tunc</i> .
<i>extant</i>	existing	Refers to things that are currently existing at a given point, rather than things that are no longer so.
<i>factum</i>	deed	1. an assured statement made; 2. completion of a will and all its parts to make it valid and legal; 3). book of facts and law presented in a Canadian court.
<i>facio ut facias</i>	I do, that you may do	A type of contract wherein one party agrees to do work for the other, in order that the second party can then perform some work for the first in exchange.
<i>favor contractus</i>	favor of the contract	A concept in treaty law that prefers the maintaining of a contract over letting it expire for purely procedural reasons.
<i>felo de se</i>	felon of himself	A suicide . This archaic term stems from English common law , where suicide was legally a felony , thus a person who committed suicide was treated as a felon for purposes of estate disposal.
<i>ferae naturae</i>	wild animals by nature	Wild animals residing on unowned property do not belong to any party in a dispute on the land. Opposite of <i>domitae naturae</i> (above).
<i>fiat</i>	Let it be done.	A warrant issued by a judge for some legal proceedings.
<i>Fiat justitia et pereat mundus</i>	Let there be justice, though the world perish.	Often used as a motto, notably by Ferdinand I, Holy Roman Emperor .
<i>fiat justitia ruat caelum</i>	Let justice be done though the heavens fall.	Also, sometimes a motto, a legal maxim that justice must be done regardless of the result otherwise.
<i>fieri facias</i>	May you cause to be done.	A writ ordering the local law enforcement to ensure that damages awarded by the court are properly recovered. A writ of execution .
<i>fortis attachiamentum, validior praesumptionem</i>	strong attachment, the stronger presumption	When determining whether a chattel is a fixture: "size doesn't matter, how much or degree chattel is attached to 'land' and to 'what' "
<i>forum non conveniens</i>	disagreeable forum	A concept wherein a court refuses to hear a particular matter, citing a more appropriate forum for the issue to be decided.
<i>fructus industriales</i>	industrial fruits	Emblements ; in property law, a co-owner profitng from her or his <i>fructus industriales</i> is solely responsible for any losses that my occur. ¹ (vs. <i>fructus naturales</i> , see below).
<i>fructus naturales</i>	natural fruits	Vegetation naturally growing from old roots (as pasturage) or from trees (as timber or fruit) (vs. <i>fructus industriales</i> , see above).
<i>fumus boni iuris</i>	smoke of a good right	Refers to having a sufficient legal basis to bring legal action.
<i>functus officio</i>	having performed his office	A person, court, statute, or legal document that has no legal authority, because its original legal purpose has been fulfilled.

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<i>generalia specialibus non derogant</i>	The general does not detract from the specific.	Specifies that a certain matter of law be covered by the most specific laws pertaining, in the event that broader laws conflict with the specific one.
<i>gravamen</i>	things weighing down	The basic element or complaint of a lawsuit.
<i>guardian ad litem</i>	guardian for the case	An independent party appointed in family law disputes to represent parties that cannot represent themselves, such as minors, developmentally disabled, or elderly.
<i>habeas corpus</i>	May you have the body.	A writ used to challenge the legality of detention. Orders the detaining party to "have the (living) body" of the detained brought before the court where the detention will be investigated.
<i>hostis humani generis</i>	enemy of the human race	A party considered to be the enemy of all nations, such as maritime pirates.
<i>i.e.</i>	that is	Abbreviation of <i>id est</i> , meaning "that is", in the sense of restating something that may not have been clear.
<i>ibid.</i>	in the same place	Abbreviation of <i>ibidem</i> , meaning "in the same place. Used when citing sources, to indicate the cited source came from the identical location as the preceding one.
<i>idem</i>	the same	Used in citations to indicate the cited source came from the same source as the preceding one, though not necessarily the same page or location. Cf. <i>ibid.</i>
<i>ignorantia juris non excusat</i>	Ignorance of the law does not excuse.	A principle that states that not having knowledge of a law is not an excuse for breaking it.
<i>imprimatur</i>	Let it be printed.	An authorization for a document to be printed. Used in the context of approval by a religious body or other censoring authority.
<i>in absentia</i>	in absence	A legal proceeding conducted without the presence of one party is said to be conducted <i>in absentia</i> , e.g., trial in absentia or being sentenced <i>in absentia</i> .
<i>In articulo mortis</i>	at the moment of death	Often used in probate law, as well as for testimony in the sense of a dying declaration .
<i>in camera</i>	in the chamber	Conducted in private, or in secret. The opposite of in open court .
<i>in curia</i>	in court	Conducted in open court. The opposite of in camera .
<i>in esse</i>	in existence	Actually, existing in reality. Opposite of <i>in posse</i> .
<i>in extenso</i>	in the extended	In extended form, or at full length. Often used to refer to publication of documents, where it means the full unabridged document is published.
<i>in extremis</i>	in the extreme	In extreme circumstances. Often used to refer to "at the point of death."
<i>in flagrante delicto</i>	in blazing offense	Caught in the actual act of committing a crime. Often used as a euphemism for a couple caught in the act of sexual intercourse , though it technically refers to being "caught in the act" of any misdeed.
<i>in forma pauperis</i>	in the manner of a pauper	Someone unable to afford the costs associated with a legal proceeding. As this will not be a barrier to seeking justice, such persons are given <i>in forma pauperis</i> status (usually abbreviated IFP), wherein most costs are waived or substantially reduced.
<i>in futuro</i>	in the future	Refers to things to come, or things that may occur later but are not so now. As in <i>in futuro</i> debts, i.e. debts which become due and payable in the future.
<i>in haec verba</i>	in these words	Used when including text in a complaint verbatim, where its appearance in that form is germane to the case or is required to be included.
<i>in limine</i>	at the threshold	A motion to a judge in a case that is heard and considered outside the presence of the jury.

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<i>in loco parentis</i>	in the place of a parent	Used to refer to a person or entity assuming the normal parental responsibilities for a minor. This can be used in transfers of legal guardianship, or in the case of schools or other institutions that act in the place of the parents on a day-to-day basis.
<i>in mitius</i>	in the milder	A type of retroactive law that decriminalizes offenses committed in the past. Also known as an amnesty law .
<i>in omnibus</i>	in all	Used to mean "in every respect." Something applying to every aspect of a situation.
<i>in pari delicto</i>	in equal offense	Used when both parties to a case are equally at fault.
<i>in pari materia</i>	in the same matter	Refers to a situation where a law or statute may be ambiguous, and similar laws applying to the matter are used to interpret the vague one.
<i>in personam</i>	in person	Used in the context of "directed at this particular person", refers to a judgement or subpoena directed at a specific named individual.
<i>in pleno</i>	in full	
<i>in prope persona</i>	on one's own person	One who represents themselves in court without the [official] assistance of an attorney.
<i>in propria persona</i>	in one's own proper person	Alternate form of <i>in prope persona</i> . One who represents themselves in court without the [official] assistance of an attorney.
<i>in re</i>	in the matter [of]	Used in the title of a decision or comment to identify the matter they are related to; usually used for a case where the proceeding is <i>in rem</i> or <i>quasi in rem</i> and not <i>in personam</i> (e.g. probate or bankrupt estate, guardianship, application for laying out a public highway) and occasionally for an <i>ex parte</i> proceeding (e.g. application for a writ of <i>habeas corpus</i>).
<i>in rem</i>	about a thing	Used in the context of a case against property, as opposed to a particular person. See also in rem jurisdiction . Cf. <i>in personam</i> .
<i>in situ</i>	in position	Often used in the context of decisions or rulings about a property or thing "left in place" after the case as it was before.
<i>in solidum</i>	for the whole	Jointly and severally; where a group of persons share liability for a debt, such as co-signers to a loan, the debtor can sue a single party <i>in solidum</i> , that is, to recover the entire amount owed.
<i>in terrorem</i>	in order to frighten	A warning or threat to sue, made in the hopes of convincing the other party to take action to avoid a lawsuit.
<i>in terrorem clause</i>	clause "in order to frighten"	A clause in a will that threatens any party who contests the will with being disinherited. Also called a no-contest clause .
<i>in toto</i>	in total	
<i>indicia</i>	indications	Often used in copyright notices. Refers to distinctive markings that identify a piece of intellectual property.
<i>infra</i>	below or under	
<i>innuendo</i>	by nodding	An intimation about someone or something, made indirectly or vaguely suggesting the thing being implied. Often used when the implied thing is negative or derogatory.
<i>inter alia</i>	among others	Used to indicate an item cited has been pulled from a larger or more complete list.
<i>inter arma enim silent leges</i>	For among arms, the laws fall silent.	A concept that during war, many illegal activities occur. Also taken to mean that in times of war, laws are suppressed, ostensibly for the good of the country.

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<i>inter rusticos</i>	among rustics	Refers to contract, debts, or other agreements made between parties who are not legal professionals.
<i>inter se</i>	amongst themselves	Refers to obligations between members of the same group or party, differentiated from the whole party's obligations to another party.
<i>inter vivos</i>	between the living	Refers to a gift or other non-sale transfer between living parties. This is in contrast to a will, where the transfer takes effect upon one party's death.
<i>intra</i>	within	
<i>intra fauces terrae</i>	within the jaws of the land	This term refers to a nation's territorial waters .
<i>intra legem</i>	within the law	Used in various contexts to refer to the legal foundation for a thing.
<i>intra vires</i>	within the powers	Something done which requires legal authority, and the act is performed accordingly. Cf. <i>ultra vires</i> .
<i>ipse dixit</i>	He himself said it.	An assertion given undue weight solely by virtue of the person making the assertion.
<i>ipsissima verba</i>	the very words	Referring to a document or ruling that is being quoted by another.
<i>ipso facto</i>	by the fact itself	Used in the context that one event is a direct and immediate consequence of another. "In and of itself."
<i>ipso jure</i>	the law itself	By operation of law.
<i>iudex non calculat</i>	The judge does not calculate.	A principle that calculation errors made by the court do not invalidate the judgement on a technicality. Also taken to mean that the judge does not tally up the arguments of both sides and decide in favor of the more numerous, but rather weighs all of the evidence without regard to the number of arguments made.
<i>jura novit curia</i>	The court knows the law.	Concept that parties to a case do not need to define how the law applies to their case. The court is solely responsible for determining what laws apply.
<i>jurat</i>	(He) swears	Appears at the end of an affidavit , where the party making the affirmation signs the oath, and the information on whom the oath was sworn before is placed.
<i>juris et de jure</i>	of law, and from law	Irrebuttable or conclusive presumptions of law. One cannot argue against or try to otherwise refute these.
<i>jus</i>	law, right	Essentially: law.
<i>jus accrescendi</i>	right of survivorship; right of accrual	Right of survivorship: In property law, on the death of one joint tenant, that tenant's interest passes automatically to the surviving tenant(s) to hold jointly until the estate is held by a sole tenant. The only way to defeat the right of survivorship is to sever the joint tenancy during the lifetime of the parties, the right of survivorship takes priority over a will or interstate accession rules. (Civil law) right of accrual: Right of the beneficiary to succeed proportionately to a benefit that another beneficiary in the same will cannot or does not want to take.
<i>jus ad bellum</i>	laws to war	Refers to legalities considered before entering into a war, to ensure it is legal to go to war initially. Not to be confused with <i>ius in bello</i> (q.v.), the "laws of war" concerning how war is carried out.
<i>jus civile</i>	civil law	A codified set of laws concerning citizenry, and how the laws apply to them.
<i>jus cogens</i>	compelling law	Internationally agreed laws that bear no deviation, and do not require treaties to be in effect. An example is law prohibiting genocide .
<i>jus commune</i>	common law	Not actually referring to common law , this term refers to common doctrine and principles of civil law that underlie all aspects of the legal system.

Glossary of Latin Phrases and Maxims used in the Law

Term or Phrase	Literal Translation	Definition and Use
jus gentium	law of nations	Customary law followed by all nations. Nations being at peace with one another, without having to have an actual peace treaty in force, would be an example of this concept.
jus in bello	law in war	Laws governing the conduct of parties in war.
jus inter gentes	law between the peoples	Laws governing treaties and international agreements.
jus naturale	natural law	Laws common to all people, that the average person would find reasonable, regardless of their nationality.
jus primae noctis	right of the first night	Supposed right of the lord of an estate to take the virginity of women in his estate on their wedding night.
jus quaesitum tertio	right to third-party relief	Right of a third-party beneficiary to sue in order to enforce a third-party contract (i.e., the opposite of privity of contract).
jus sanguinis	right of blood	Social law concept wherein citizenship of a nation is determined by having one or both parents being citizens.
jus soli	right of soil	Social law concept wherein citizenship of a nation is determined by place of birth.
jus tertii	law of the third	Arguments made by a third party in disputes over possession, the intent of which is to question one of the principal parties' claims of ownership or rights to ownership.
lacunae	void, gap	A situation arising that is not covered by any law. Generally used in International Law, as all countries codify according to their own systems of law.
leges humanae nascuntur, vivunt, moriuntur	The laws of man are born, live, and die.	Illustrates that laws are made, are in force for a period, and then become obsolete.
lex commissoria		Forfeiture clause for nonperformance of a contract, especially (1) a provision that a pledge shall be forfeited if a loan is defaulted, or (2) a condition that money paid on a contract of sale shall be forfeited and the sale rescinded if outstanding payments are defaulted. Also known as a <i>pactum commissorium</i> .
lex communis	common law	Alternate form of jus commune . Refers to common facets of civil law that underlie all aspects of the law.
lex lata	the law borne	The law as it has been enacted.
lex loci	the law of the place	The law of the country, state, or locality where the matter under litigation took place. Usually used in contract law, to determine which laws govern the contract.
lex posterior derogat priori	Later law removes the earlier.	More recent law overrules older ones on the same matter.
lex retro non agit	The law does not operate retroactively.	A law cannot make something illegal that was legal at the time it was performed. See ex post facto law .
lex scripta	written law	Law that specifically codifies something, as opposed to common law or customary law .
lex specialis derogat legi generali	Specific law takes away from the general law.	Where several laws apply to the same situation, the more specific one(s) take precedence over more general ones.
liberum veto	free veto	An aspect of a unanimous voting system, whereby any member can end discussion on a proposed law.
lingua franca	the Frankish language	A language common to an area that is spoken by all, even if not their mother tongue. Term derives from the name given to a common language used by traders in the Mediterranean basin dating from the Middle Ages.

Glossary of Latin Phrases and Maxims used in the Law

Term or Phrase	Literal Translation	Definition and Use
<i>lis alibi pendens</i>	lawsuit elsewhere pending	Refers to requesting a legal dispute be heard that is also being heard by another court. To avoid possibly contradictory judgements, this request will not be granted.
<i>lis pendens</i>	suit pending	Often used in the context of public announcements of legal proceedings to come. Compare <i>pendente lite</i> (below).
<i>locus</i>	place	Place or location.
<i>locus delicti</i>	place of the crime	Shorthand version of <i>Lex locus delicti commissi</i> . The "scene of the crime".
<i>locus in quo</i>	the place in which	The location where a cause of action arose.
<i>locus poenitentiae</i>	place of repentance	When one party withdraws from a contract before all parties are bound.
<i>locus standi</i>	place of standing	The right of a party to appear and be heard before a court.
<i>mala fide</i>	(in) bad faith	A condition of being fraudulent or deceptive in act or belief.
<i>maleficia propositis distinguuntur</i>	Evil acts are distinguished from (evil) purposes/crimes are distinguished by evil intent.	Evil acts are distinguished from evil purposes, crimes are distinguished by the intention
<i>malum in se</i>	wrong in itself	Something considered a universal wrong or evil, regardless of the system of laws in effect.
<i>malum prohibitum</i>	prohibited wrong	Something wrong or illegal by virtue of it being expressly prohibited, that might not otherwise be so.
<i>mandamus</i>	we command	A writ issue by a higher court to a lower one, ordering that court or related officials to perform some administrative duty. Often used in the context of legal oversight of government agencies.
<i>mare clausum</i>	closed sea	A body of water under the jurisdiction of a state or nation, to which access is not permitted, or is tightly regulated.
<i>mare liberum</i>	open sea	A body of water open to all. Typically, a synonym for International Waters, or in other legal parlance, the "High Seas".
<i>mens rea</i>	guilty mind	One of the requirements for a crime to be committed, the other being <i>actus reus</i> , the guilt act. This essentially is the basis for the notion that those without sufficient mental capability cannot be judged guilty of a crime.
<i>modus operandi</i>	manner of operation	A person's particular way of doing things. Used when using <i>behavioural analysis</i> while investigating a crime. Often abbreviated as "M.O."
<i>mora accipiendi</i>	delay of creditor	Delay in payment or performance in the part of the creditor or obligor.
<i>mora solvendi</i>	delay of debtor	Delay in payment or performance in the part of the debtor or the obligee.
<i>mortis causa</i>	in contemplation of death	Gift or trust that is made in contemplation of death.
<i>mos pro lege</i>	custom for law	That which is the usual custom has the force of law.
<i>motion in limine</i>	motion at the start	Motions offered at the start of a trial, often to suppress or pre-allow certain evidence or testimony.
<i>mutatis mutandis</i>	having changed [the things that] needed to be changed	A caution to a reader when using one example to illustrate a related but slightly different situation. The caution is that the reader must adapt the example to change what is needed for it to apply to the new situation.
<i>ne exeat</i>	let him not exit [the republic]	Shortened version of <i>ne exeat republica</i> : "let him not exit the republic". A writ to prevent one party to a dispute from leaving (or being taken) from the court's jurisdiction.
<i>non bis in idem</i>	not twice in the same	Prohibition against <i>double jeopardy</i> . A legal action cannot be brought twice for the same act or offense.

Glossary of Latin Phrases and Maxims used in the Law

Term or Phrase	Literal Translation	Definition and Use
negotiorum gestio	management of estate	Quasi-contractual obligation arising from good works affecting other people, obliging the benefited party (<i>dominus negotii</i>) to reimburse the <i>gestor</i> for the cost that was used in doing good works.
nemo auditur propriam turpitudinem allegans	No one can be heard, who invokes his own guilt.	Nobody can bring a case that stems from their own illegal act.
nemo dat quod non habet	No one gives what he does not have.	If someone purchases something that the seller has no right to (such as stolen property), the purchaser will likewise have no legal claim to the thing bought.
nemo debet esse iudex in propria	No one shall be a judge in his own case.	In the past it was thought that it included just two rules namely (1) <i>nemo debet esse iudex in propria causa</i> (no one shall be a judge in his own case) ^[clarification needed]
nemo ius ignoratur censetur	Not knowing the law is harmful.	Everyone should know the law. This is used in European Law-countries with a history of Roman law, the 'sentence' was first made by Aristotle .
nemo iudex in sua causa	No one shall be a judge in his own case.	Prevents conflict of interest in courts. Often invoked when there is really no conflict, but when there is even the appearance of one.
nemo plus iuris ad alium transferre potest quam ipse habet	No one can transfer a greater right than he himself has.	A purchaser of stolen goods will not become the rightful owner thereof, since the seller himself was not the owner to begin with.
nihil dicit	He says nothing.	A judgement rendered in the absence of a plea, or in the event one party refuses to cooperate in the proceedings.
nisi	unless	A decree that does not enter into force unless some other specified condition is met.
nisi prius	unless first	Refers to the court of original jurisdiction in a given matter.
nolle prosequi	not to prosecute	A statement from the prosecution that they are voluntarily discontinuing (or will not initiate) prosecution of a matter.
nolo contendere	I do not wish to dispute	A type of plea whereby the defendant neither admits nor denies the charge. Commonly interpreted as "No contest."
non adimpleti contractus	of a non-completed contract	In the case where a contract imposes specific obligations on both parties, one side cannot sue the other for failure to meet their obligations, if the plaintiff has not themselves met their own.
non compos mentis	not in possession of [one's] mind	Not having mental capacity to perform some legal act.
non constat	It is not certain.	Refers to information given by one who is not supposed to give testimony, such as an attorney bringing up new information that did not come from a witness. Such information is typically nullified.
non est factum	It is not [my] deed.	A method whereby a signatory to a contract can invalidate it by showing that his signature to the contract was made unintentionally or without full understanding of the implications.
non est inventus	He is not found.	Reported by a sheriff on writ when the defendant cannot be found in his county or jurisdiction.
non faciat malum, ut inde veniat bonum	Not to do evil that good may come.	Performing some illegal action is not excused by the fact that a positive result came therefrom. Often used to argue that some forms of expression, such as graffiti or pornographic films, cannot be given the protection of law (e.g. copyright) as they are or may be considered illegal or morally reprehensible.
non liquet	It is not clear.	A type of verdict where positive guilt or innocence cannot be determined. Also

Term or Phrase	Literal Translation	Definition and Use
		called "not proven" in legal systems with such verdicts.
non obstante verdicto	notwithstanding the verdict	A circumstance where the judge may override the jury verdict and reverse or modify the decision.
novus actus interveniens	a new action coming between	A break in causation (and therefore probably liability) because something else has happened to remove the causal link.
noscitur a sociis	It is known by friends.	An ambiguous word or term can be clarified by considering the whole context in which it is used, without having to define the term itself.
nota bene	note well	A term used to direct the reader to cautionary or qualifying statements for the main text.
nudum pactum	naked promise	An unenforceable promise, due to the absence of consideration or value exchanged for the promise.
nulla bona	no goods	Notation made when a defendant has no tangible property available to be seized in order to comply with a judgement.
nulla poena sine lege	no penalty without a law	One cannot be prosecuted for doing something that is not prohibited by law.
nullum crimen, nulla poena sine praevia lege poenali	no crime, no punishment without a previous penal law	One cannot be prosecuted for doing something that was not prohibited by law at the time and place it was committed, notwithstanding laws made since that time. A form of prohibition on retroactive laws.
nunc pro tunc	now for then	An action by a court to correct a previous procedural or clerical error.
obiter dictum	a thing said in passing	In law, an observation by a judge on some point of law not directly relevant to the case before him, and thus neither requiring his decision nor serving as a precedent, but nevertheless of persuasive authority. In general, any comment, remark or observation made in passing.
onus probandi	the burden of proof	
pace	with peace	Used to say 'contrary to the opinion of.' It is a polite way of marking a speaker's disagreement with someone or somebody of thought.
pacta sunt servanda	Agreements must be kept.	A fundamental principle of law.
par delictum	equal fault	Used when both parties to a dispute are at fault.
parens patriae	parent of the nation	Refers to the power of the State to act as parent to a child when the legal parents are unable or unwilling.
pari passu	on equal footing	Equal ranking, equal priority (usually referring to creditors).
pater familias	father of the family	The head of household , for purposes of considering the rights and responsibilities thereof. (Civil law) <i>bonus paterfamilias</i> : a standard of care equivalent to the common law ordinary reasonable man .
pendente lite	while the litigation is pending	Court orders used to provide relief until the final judgement is rendered. Commonly used in divorce proceedings. The adverbial form of <i>lis pendens</i> (above).
per capita	by head	Dividing money up strictly and equally according to the number of beneficiaries
per contra	by that against	Legal shorthand for "in contrast to".
per curiam	through the court	A decision delivered by a multi-judge panel, such as an appellate court, in which the decision is said to be authored by the court itself, instead of situations where those individual judges supporting the decision are named.
per incuriam	by their neglect	A judgement given without reference to precedent.

Glossary of Latin Phrases and Maxims used in the Law

Term or Phrase	Literal Translation	Definition and Use
per minas	through threats	Used as a defense, when illegal acts were performed under duress.
per proxima amici	by or through the next friend	Employed when an adult brings suit on behalf of a minor, who was unable to maintain an action on his own behalf at common law.
per quod	by which	Used in legal documents in the same sense as "whereby". A <i>per quod</i> statement is typically used to show that specific acts had consequences which form the basis for the legal action.
per se	by itself	Something that is, as a matter of law.
per stirpes	by branch	An estate of a decedent is distributed per stirpes, if each branch of the family is to receive an equal share of an estate.
periculum in mora	danger in delay	A condition given to support requests for urgent action, such as a protective order or restraining order.
persona non grata	unwelcome person	A person who is officially considered unwelcome by a host country in which they are residing in a diplomatic capacity. The person is typically expelled to their home country.
posse comitatus	power of the county	A body of armed citizens pressed into service by legal authority, to keep the peace or pursue a fugitive.
post mortem	after death	Refers to an autopsy , or as a qualification as to when some event occurred.
post mortem auctoris	after the author's death	Used in reference to intellectual property rights, which usually are based around the author's lifetime.
praetor peregrinus	magistrate of foreigners	The Roman praetor (magistrate) responsible for matters involving non-Romans.
prima facie	at first face	A matter that appears to be sufficiently based in the evidence as to be considered true.
prior tempore potior iure	earlier in time, stronger in law	(1) A legal principle that older laws take precedence over newer ones. Another name for this principle is <i>lex posterior</i> . (2) (Scots law, civil law), usually translated as "prior in time, superior in right", the principle that someone who registers (a security interest) earlier therefore ranks higher than other creditors.
prius quam exaudias ne iudices	Before you hear, do not judge.	Don't be too hasty in coming to a decision.
probatio vincit praesumptionem	Proof overcomes presumption.	
pro bono	for good	Professional work done for free.
pro bono publico	for the public good	
pro forma	as a matter of form	Things done as formalities.
pro hac vice	for this turn	Refers to a lawyer who is allowed to participate (only) in a specific case, despite being in a jurisdiction in which he has not been generally admitted.
pro per	abbreviation of <i>propria persona</i> , meaning "one's own person"	Representing oneself, without counsel. Also known as <i>pro se</i> representation.
pro rata	from the rate	A calculation adjusted based on a proportional value relevant to the calculation. An example would be a tenant being charged a portion of a month's rent based on having lived there less than a full month. The amount charged would be proportional to the time occupied.
pro se	for himself	Representing oneself, without counsel. Also known as <i>pro per</i> representation.

Glossary of Latin Phrases and Maxims used in the Law

Term or Phrase	Literal Translation	Definition and Use
pro tanto	for so much	A partial payment of an award or claim, based on the defendant's ability to pay.
pro tem	abbreviation of <i>pro tempore</i> , meaning "for the time being"	Something, such as an office held, that is temporary.
pro tempore	for the time being	Something, such as an office held, that is temporary.
propria persona	proper person	Refers to one representing themselves without the services of a lawyer. Also known as <i>pro per</i> representation.
prout patet per recordum	as appears in the record	Used to cite something that has already been admitted into the record. It was frequently used in pleadings , generally abbreviated "prout &c.", to indicate that a fact was supported by documentary evidence.
qua	which; as	In the capacity of.
quaeritur	It is sought.	The question is raised. Used to declare that a question is being asked in the following verbiage.
quaere	query	Used in legal drafts to call attention to some uncertainty or inconsistency in the material being cited.
quantum	how much	
quantum meruit	as much as it deserves; as much as she or he has earned	In contract law, a quasi-contractual remedy that permits partial reasonable payment for an incomplete piece of work (services and/or materials), assessed proportionately, where no price is established when the request is made. In particular the requirement for consideration, if no fixed price is agreed upon for the service and/or materials, then one party would request a reasonable price for the said services and/or materials at the end of the job. A common example would be a plumber requested to fix a leak in the middle of the night.
quantum valebant	as much as they were worth	Under Common Law, a remedy to compute reasonable damages when a contract has been breached – the implied promise of payment of a reasonable price for goods. In contract law, for requirements of consideration, reasonable worth for goods delivered. Usage: quantum meruit has replaced quantum valebant in consideration; in the case of contract remedy, <i>quantum valebant</i> is being used less, and could be considered obsolete.
quasi	as if	Resembling or being similar to something, without actually being that thing.
qui facit per alium facit per se	who acts through another, acts himself	One who delegates a task to another, takes full responsibility for the performance of that act as if he himself had done it. Basis for the law of agency .
qui tam	abbreviation of <i>qui tam pro domino rege quam pro se ipso in hac parte sequitur</i> , meaning "who pursues in this action as much for the king as himself".	In a <i>qui tam</i> action, one who assists the prosecution of a case is entitled to a proportion of any fines or penalties assessed.
quid pro quo	this for that	An equal exchange of goods or services, or of money (or other consideration of equal value) for some goods or services.
quo ante	as before	Returning to a specific state of affairs which preceded some defined action.
quo warranto	by what warrant	A request made to someone exercising some power, to show by what legal right they are exercising that power. A type of writ .
quoad hoc	as to this	Used to mean "with respect to" some named thing, such as when stating what the law is in regards to that named thing.
quod est necessarium est	What is necessary is lawful.	

Term or Phrase	Literal Translation	Definition and Use
licitum		
R	Rex or Regina	King or Queen. In British cases, will see R v Freeman meaning Regina against Freeman. Changes with King or Queen on throne at time.
ratio decidendi	reason for the decision	The point in a legal proceeding, or the legal precedent so involved, which led to the final decision being what it was.
ratio scripta	written reason	The popular opinion of Roman law, held by those in the Medieval period.
rationae soli	by reason of the soil	"Certain rights may arise by virtue of ownership of the soil upon which wild animals are found."
rebus sic stantibus	things thus standing	A qualification in a treaty or contract, that allows for nullification in the event fundamental circumstances change.
reddendo singula singulis	referring solely to the last	The canon of construction that in a list of items containing a qualifying phrase at the end, the qualifier refers only to the last item in the list.
res	thing, matter, issue, affair	
res communis	common to all	Property constructs like airspace and water rights are said to be <i>res communis</i> – that is, a thing common to all, and that could not be the subject of ownership. With airspace, the difficulty has been to identify where the fee simple holder's rights to the heavens end. Water is a bit more defined – it is common until captured.
res gestae	things done	Differing meaning depending on what type of law is involved. May refer to the complete act of a felony, from start to finish, or may refer to statements given that may be exempt from hearsay rules.
res ipsa loquitur	The thing speaks for itself.	used in tort law when there is no proof of what caused the harm, but it is most likely only the thing that could have caused the harm.
res judicata	a matter judged	A matter that has been finally adjudicated, meaning no further appeals or legal actions by the involved parties is now possible.
res nullius	nobody's thing	Ownerless property or goods. Such property or goods are able and subject to being owned by anybody.
res publica	public affair	All things subject to concern by the citizenry. The root of the word republic .
res publica christiana	Christian public affair	All things of concern to the worldwide body of Christianity.
respondeat superior	Let the master answer.	A concept that the master (e.g. employer) is responsible for the actions of his subordinates (e.g. employees).
restitutio in integrum	total reinstatement	(1) Restoration of something, such as a building or damaged property, to its original condition. (2) In contract law, when considering breach of contract and remedies, to restore a party to an original position.
rex non potest peccare	The king can do no wrong.	Used to describe the basis for sovereign immunity .
salus populi suprema lex esto	The good of the people shall be the supreme law.	Used variously as a motto, a reminder, or a notion of how the law and governments in general should be.
scandalum magnatum	scandal of the magnates	Defamation against a peer in British law. Now repealed as a specific offense.
scienter	knowingly	Used when offenses or torts were committed with the full awareness of the one so committing.
scire facias	Let them know.	A writ, directing local officials to officially inform a party of official proceedings concerning them.

Term or Phrase	Literal Translation	Definition and Use
scire feci	I have made known.	The official response of the official serving a writ of <i>scire facias</i> , informing the court that the writ has been properly delivered.
Secundum formam statuti	According to the form of the statute.	
se defendendo	self-defense	The act of defending one's own person or property, or the well-being or property of another.
seriatim	in series	Describes the process in which the court hears assorted matters in a specific order. Also refers to an occasion where a multiple-judge panel will issue individual opinions from the members, rather than a single ruling from the entire panel.
sic utere tuo ut alienum non laedas	Use your property so as not to injure that of your neighbours.	While an individual is entitled to the use and enjoyment of one's estate, the right is not without limits. Restrictions can give rise to tort actions include trespass, negligence, strict liability, and nuisance.
sine die	without day	Used when the court is adjourning without specifying a date to re-convene. See also adjournment sine die .
sine qua non	without which, nothing	Refers to some essential event or action, without which there can be no specified consequence.
situs	the place	Used to refer to laws specific to the location where specific property exists, or where an offense or tort was committed.
solutio indebiti	performance of something not due	Undue performance or payment, obliging the enricher (<i>accipiens</i>) to return the undue payment or compensate the impoverisher (<i>solvens</i>) for the undue performance.
stare decisis	to stand by [things] decided	The obligation of a judge to stand by a prior precedent.
status quo status quo ante statu quo	the state in which	In contract law, in a case of innocent representation, the injured party is entitled to be replaced in status quo. Note the common usage is <i>status quo</i> from the Latin status quo ante, the "state in which before" or "the state of affairs that existed previously."
stratum	a covering, from neuter past participle of sternere, to spread	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) In property law, condominiums has said to occupy stratum many stories about the ground. 2) Stratum can also be a societal level made up of individuals with similar status of social, cultural or economic nature. 3) Stratum can refer to classification in an organized system along the lines of layers, levels, divisions, or similar grouping.
sua sponte	of its own accord	Some action taken by the public prosecutor or another official body, without the prompting of a plaintiff or another party. (compare <i>ex proprio motu</i> , <i>ex mero motu</i> which are used for courts).
sub judice	under the judge	Refers to a matter currently being considered by the court.
sub modo	subject to modification	Term in contract law that allows limited modifications to a contract after the original form has been agreed to by all parties.
sub nomine	under the name	Abbreviated <i>sub nom.</i> ; used in case citations to indicate that the official name of a case changed during the proceedings, usually after appeal (e.g., <i>rev'd sub nom.</i> and <i>aff'd sub nom.</i>)
sub silentio	under silence	A ruling, order, or other court action made without specifically stating the ruling, order, or action. The effect of the ruling or action is implied by related and subsequent actions, but not specifically stated.
subpoena	under penalty	A writ compelling testimony, the production of evidence, or some other action, under penalty for failure to do so.

Glossary of Latin Phrases and Maxims used in the Law

Term or Phrase	Literal Translation	Definition and Use
subpoena ad testificandum	under penalty to be witnessed	An order compelling an entity to give oral testimony in a legal matter.
subpoena duces tecum	bring with you under penalty	An order compelling an entity to produce physical evidence or witness in a legal matter.
suggestio falsi	false suggestion	A false statement made in the negotiation of a contract.
sui generis	of its own kind/genus	Something that is unique amongst a group.
sui juris	of his own right	Refers to one legally competent to manage his own affairs. Also spelled <i>sui iuris</i> .
suo motu	of its own motion	Refers to a court or other official agency taking some action on its own accord (synonyms: <i>ex proprio motu</i> , <i>ex mero motu</i>). Similar to <i>sua sponte</i> .
supersedeas	refrain from	A bond tendered by an appellant as surety to the court, requesting a delay of payment for awards or damages granted, pending the outcome of the appeal.
suppressio veri	suppression of the truth	Willful concealment of the truth when bound to reveal it, such as withholding details of damage from an auto accident from a prospective buyer of the car in that accident.
supra	above	Used in citations to refer to a previously cited source.
tantum et tale	thus and such	(Scots law) " as is ", to disclaim implied warranties, as in to purchase or convey something <i>tantum et tale</i> .
terra nullius	no one's land	Land that has never been part of a sovereign state, or land which a sovereign state has relinquished claim to.
trial de novo	trial anew	A completely new trial of a matter previously judged. It specifically refers to a replacement trial for the previous one, and not an appeal of the previous decision.
trinoda necessitas	three-knotted need	Refers to a threefold tax levied on Anglo-Saxon citizens to cover roads, buildings, and the military.
uberrima fides	most abundant faith	Concept in contract law specifying that all parties must act with the utmost good faith.
ultra posse nemo obligatur	No one is obligated (to do) more than he can.	Specifies that one should do what he can to support the community, but since everyone has different levels of ability, it cannot be expected that all will perform the same.
ultra vires	beyond the powers	An act that requires legal authority to perform, but which is done without obtaining that authority.
universitas personarum	totality of people	Aggregate of people, body corporate, as in a college, corporation, or state
universitas rerum	totality of things	Aggregate of things.
uno flatu	in one breath	Used to criticize inconsistencies in speech or testimony, as in: one says one thing, and in the same breath, says another contradictory thing.
uti possidetis	as you possess	Ancient concept regarding conflicts, wherein all property possessed by the parties at the conclusion of the conflict shall remain owned by those parties unless treaties to the contrary are enacted.
uxor	wife	Used in documents in place of the wife's name. Usually abbreviated <i>et ux</i> .
vel non	or not	Used when considering whether some event or situation is either present or it is not.
veto	I forbid.	The power of an executive to prevent an action, especially the enactment of legislation .
vice versa	the other way around	Something that is the same either way.

Term or Phrase	Literal Translation	Definition and Use
vide	see	Used in citations to refer the reader to another location.
videlicet	contraction of <i>videre licet</i> , meaning "it is permitted to see"	Used in documents to mean "namely" or "that is". Usually abbreviated viz.
vis major	greater or superior force	Force majeure , specifically events over which no humans have control, and so cannot be held responsible. Equivalent to an "Act of God".
viz.	abbreviation of <i>videlicet</i>	Namely. That is to say.
volenti non fit injuria	Injury is not done to the willing.	Notion that a person cannot bring a claim against another for injury, if said person willingly placed themselves in a situation where they knew injury could result.
vigilantibus non dormientibus aequitas subvenit	Equity aids the vigilant, not the sleeping.	Concept that if an opposing party unreasonably delays bringing an action, that it is no longer considered just to hear their claim, due to fundamental changes in circumstance brought upon by their delay.

Further Information

This guide is for general interest - it is always essential to take advice on specific issues. We believe that the facts are correct as at the date of publication, but there may be certain errors and omissions for which we cannot be responsible.

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