

Intro to Small Claims: Resources

I've tried to keep the number of pages you must print out before each class to a minimum. Generally, I try to provide a bullet-outline of content that organizes and sets out the main points of the lecture. Sometimes I use the "handout version" of a PowerPoint for that purpose, but I often delay making the PowerPoint available until after class – I don't want students looking ahead for the answers! In addition to providing some outline of content, I also try to provide written materials in support of in-class exercises. For all of these "in-class" materials, it works equally well (for me) if you print them out or simply view them on your phone or tablet as we work. I never ask that you hand in such materials to me.

I DO sometimes ask that you write out an answer or response, or make notes about something, and you should always have what you need to do that when you come to class.

What this means is that in-class materials are intended to be functional, rather than primarily used for future reference. I DO hope, though, that you will assemble a small claims reference notebook, whether virtual or the old-fashioned kind, and I will be identifying and providing materials you might consider including. Materials specifically related to the content of this course – but not absolutely required to participate during class -- will be posted under "Additional Material" on the course page (<https://www.sog.unc.edu/courses/introduction-holding-small-claims-court-magistrates-0>).

Everyone has their own unique style, of course, and I very much like the idea of a customized notebook assembled and organized by you in the way that works best for you. What follows are some suggestions, observations, and potential sources for the contents of that resource.

In my own notebooks, I include a section for relevant statutes and AOC forms. [Remember that I am old, and thus I have to print things out for them to actually work well for me. Because we have both statutes and forms literally at our fingertips these days, it may seem completely unnecessary to you to include these materials!]

I suggest that you include from Basic School those fundamental outlines of law for the following subjects:

Small Claims Procedure

Contracts

Actions to Recover Personal Property

Torts

Landlord-Tenant Law

If Basic School was a long time ago for you, you might substitute materials from a more recent school. Here's how you can find those and other materials to include in your notebook:

Go to the SOG microsite for magistrates at <https://www.sog.unc.edu/resources/microsites/nc-magistrates/>. On the right, at the top, you'll see a list of items under Education and Training. Click on *Materials from Recent Training Events*. (They actually go back to 2009.) Here you'll find handouts from conferences as well as from Judicial College seminars such as this one. Print out whatever looks useful -- but remember that the law may have changed in recent years, so use caution!

The other great resource available from the SOG are blog posts. For small claims law, On the Civil Side is likely to be useful to you. (This blog is written by a large number of SOG faculty for clients from many groups, so many posts will not be related to small claims.) You can subscribe at <https://civil.sog.unc.edu/subscribe/>, or simply check in from time to time at <https://civil.sog.unc.edu/>. You can find a list of blog posts related to small claims by searching for my name under *Contributors* and clicking on "View Posts."