

Finding Gold On The Legislature's Web Site

A Tutorial On Navigating The California Legislature's
Web Site

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Justice

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HOW TO FIND THE LEGISLATURE'S WEB SITE ON THE INTERNET

Finding the web site is simple.

Just direct your browser to:

<http://www.legislature.ca.gov/>

Note: You may want to book mark the legislature's web site, or add it to your favorites list, so you can easily return to the site.

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HOW TO FIND WHO YOUR STATE LEGISLATORS ARE

- ▶ Direct your browser to: <http://www.legislature.ca.gov/>
- ▶ Click on “Legislators and Districts” on the left side of the page.
- ▶ Click on “Find your Legislator.”
- ▶ Click on “Search by ZIP code,”
- ▶ Type in your ZIP Code and click Search.

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HOW TO FIND THE STATE LEGISLATURE'S CAUCUSES AND CAUCUS MEMBERS

State legislators form caucuses, or groups, based on common interests. For example there is a women's caucus, a Latino/Latina caucus, and an LGBT caucus. To find these caucuses and who is in them:

- ▶ Direct your browser to: <http://www.legislature.ca.gov/>
- ▶ Click on “Leadership and Caucuses.”
- ▶ Click on “List of California Legislative Caucuses.”
- ▶ Click on a caucus name to see which legislators are in it.

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HOW TO FIND PARTICULAR BILLS BY BILL NUMBER

1. Go to the legislature's web site at: <http://www.legislature.ca.gov>
2. Click "Bill Information" on the left side of the page.
3. Click "Bill Search" near the top of the page.
4. Type a bill number in the box and click search.
5. Click on the bill number.
6. Click on "HTML" under bill text.

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HOW TO FIND BILLS RELATING TO AN ISSUE

1. Go to the legislature's web site at: <http://www.legislature.ca.gov>
2. Click "Bill Information" on the left side of the page.
3. Click "Bill Search" near the top of the page.
4. Click on the bullet next to "Keyword(s)".
5. Type a word, or words relating to an issue in the dialogue box and click "Search".
6. Click on a bill number.
7. Click on "HTML," under bill text to see the bill.

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HOW TO FIND ALL BILLS OF A LEGISLATOR

1. Go to the legislature's web site at: <http://www.legislature.ca.gov>
2. Click "Bill Information" on the left side of the page.
3. Click "Bill Search" near the top of the page.
4. Click on the bullet next to "Author(s)".
5. Type the legislator's last name in the dialogue box and click "Search".
6. Click on a bill number.
7. Click on "HTML," under bill text to see the bill.

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HOW TO FIND WHERE A BILL IS IN THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS

- ▶ Bills must be approved by their house of origin before they can be sent to the other house. (AB bills must be approved first by the Assembly. SB bills must be approved first by the Senate.)
- ▶ Each bill must be approved by a policy committee (sometimes two), which consider whether or not it is good policy, before the full house can vote on it.
- ▶ Bills that will cost the state significant money also must be approved by each house's Appropriations Committee before going to the floor of the house.
- ▶ Committee votes are scheduled for specific dates, which can be found on the legislature's web site.
- ▶ House floor votes can occur at any time after necessary committees have approved a bill. (See next slide for further details.)

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HOW TO FIND WHERE A BILL IS IN THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS - CONTINUED

Generally, when a bill is scheduled for a vote in a committee the date is posted on the legislature's web site a week before the date.

- ▶ To see where a bill is in the legislative process:
- ▶ 1. Go to the legislature's web site at: <http://www.legislature.ca.gov>
- ▶ 2. On the right side of the resulting page, key the bill number (such as 699) into the dialogue box below "Bill Number" and then click "Search".
- ▶ 3. Click on the specific bill you care about (such as AB 699 or SB 699)
- ▶ 4. Click on History at the top of the resulting page. (If a bill has been scheduled for a committee vote the committee and vote date will appear in the resulting list.

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HOW TO FIND DESCRIPTIONS (I.E. ANALYSES) OF BILLS

1. Go to the legislature's web site at: <http://www.legislature.ca.gov>
2. Click "Bill Information" on the left side of the page.
3. Click "Bill Search" near the top of the page.
4. Type a bill number in the box and click search.
5. Click on the bill number.
6. Click on any link under the word "Analyses".

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HOW TO FIND WHAT GROUPS AND INDIVIDUALS SUPPORT OR OPPOSE A BILL

1. Go to the legislature's web site at: <http://www.legislature.ca.gov>
2. Click "Bill Information" on the left side of the page.
3. Click "Bill Search" near the top of the page.
4. Type a bill number in the box and click search.
5. Click on the bill number.
6. Click on any link under the word "Analyses".
7. Read the analyses to see who supports or opposes the bill.

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HOW TO FIND A BILL'S CURRENT STATUS

1. Go to the legislature's web site at: <http://www.legislature.ca.gov>
2. Click "Bill Information" on the left side of the page.
3. Click "Bill Search" near the top of the page.
4. Type a bill number in the box and click search.
5. Click on the bill number.
6. Click on the word "Status".
7. Read the "LAST HIST. ACTION" line.

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HOW TO FIND WHICH LEGISLATORS VOTED FOR OR AGAINST A BILL

1. Go to the legislature's web site at: <http://www.legislature.ca.gov>
2. Click "Bill Information" on the left side of the page.
3. Click "Bill Search" near the top of the page.
4. Type a bill number in the box and click search.
5. Click on the bill number.
6. Click on any link under the word "Votes".

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HOW TO FIND THE PHONE AND FAX NUMBERS OF LEGISLATORS

- ▶ Go to the legislature's web site at: <http://www.legislature.ca.gov>
- ▶ Click on "Legislators" on the left side of the page.
- ▶ Click on "Senate Roster" or "Assembly Roster" as appropriate.
- ▶ Scroll down to the name of the legislator whose contact information you want.

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HOW TO LISTEN TO COMMITTEE HEARINGS AND FLOOR SESSIONS

- ▶ Generally, committee hearings and Senate and Assembly floor sessions can be heard over the internet. Each day, the times and dates of that day's broadcasts are listed on the "Live Web Cast" page of the legislature's web site. To listen to a broadcast on your computer:
- ▶ Go to the legislature's web site at: <http://www.legislature.ca.gov>
- ▶ Click on "California Channel" under "Audio/TV."
- ▶ Click on "Video on Demand" and then click on "Live Webcast."
- ▶ At the start time shown for the broadcast, click on the floor session, or committee hearing shown on the "Live Webcast" page.

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HOW TO FIND LISTS OF LEGISLATORS ON COMMITTEES

- ▶ Go to the legislature's web site at: <http://www.legislature.ca.gov>
- ▶ Click on "Committees, Hearings and Events" on the left side of the page.
- ▶ Click on "Senate Committees" or "Assembly Committees" under "Links to Committee Information."
- ▶ Click on a committee title to see a list of legislators on that committee.

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