

Legal Terms

A

Accused	The person charged. The person who has allegedly committed the offence
Acknowledgement of service	Form of reply to, or confirmation of, service of process
Acquittal	Discharge of defendant following verdict or direction of not guilty
Act	Law, as an act of parliament
Action	see claim
Adjourned generally or sine die	Temporary suspension of the hearing of a case by order of the Court (maybe for a short period, e.g. to next day or sine die).
Adjudication	Judgment or decision of a Court or tribunal
Administration order	An order by a County Court directing a debtor to pay a specified monthly installment into Court in respect of outstanding debts. The Court retains the payments made and at intervals distributes it between the creditors on a pro-rata basis
Admiralty actions	see High Court
Adoption	An act by which the rights and duties of the natural parents of a child are extinguished and equivalent rights and duties become vested in the adopter or adopters, to whom the child then stands in all respects as if born to them in marriage
Adultery	Voluntary sexual intercourse between a married person and another person who is not the spouse, while the marriage is still valid. This is a common fact relied on for divorce
Advocate	A barrister or solicitor representing a party in a hearing before a Court
Affidavit	A written statement of evidence confirmed on oath or by affirmation to be true and taken before someone who has authority to administer it
Affirmation	Declaration by a witness who has no religious belief, or has religious beliefs that prevent him/her taking the oath, that the evidence he/she is giving is the truth
Allocation questionnaire	Issued to all parties after a defence has been filed. This form details all the evidence to be used as well as the required domestic arrangements for the trial
Alternative dispute resolution	An alternative method by which parties can resolve their dispute - could be arbitration
Ancillary relief	Additional claims (e.g. in respect of maintenance) attached to the petition for divorce/judicial separation/nullity
Annul	To declare no longer valid
Appeal	Application to a higher Court or authority for review of a decision of a lower Court or authority
Appellant	Person who appeals

Applicant	Person making the request or demand, e.g. person who issues an application
Application	The act of applying to a Court
Appraisal or appraisal	Valuation of goods seized under warrant of execution prior to sale
Assisted person (legally)	A party to legal proceedings who is receiving legal aid
Attachment of earnings	An order that directs an employer of a debtor to deduct regularly an amount, fixed by the Court, from the debtor's earnings and pay that sum into Court
Award	Result of an arbitration hearing or the amount of damages assessed by a Court
B	
Bail	Release of a defendant from custody, until his/her next appearance in Court, subject sometimes to security being given and/or compliance with certain conditions
Bailiff	Officer of the County Court empowered to serve Court documents and execute warrants
Bankrupt	Insolvent - unable to pay creditors and having all goods/effects administered by a liquidator or trustee and sold for the benefit of those creditors; as a result of an order under the Insolvency Act 1986
Bar	The collective term for barristers
Barrister	A member of the bar: the branch of the legal profession which has rights of audience before all Courts
Bench warrant	A warrant issued by the judge for an absent defendant to be arrested and brought before a Court
Bill of costs	(see Taxation)
Bill of indictment	A written statement of the charges against a defendant sent for trial to the Crown Court, and signed by an officer of the Court
Bind over	In the Crown Court or (more usually) the Magistrates Court, and signed by an officer of the Court
Bind over for sentence	An order which requires the defendant to return to Court on an unspecified date for sentence. Failure to observe this order may result in a forfeit or penalty to be enforced
Brief	Written instructions to counsel to appear at a hearing on behalf of a party prepared by the solicitor and setting out the facts of the case and any case law relied upon
C	
Case conference	Usually the first hearing in a Multi track claim and an opportunity to take stock and consider the way forward
Case number	A unique reference number allocated to each case by the issuing

	Court
Caution	<p>i) Notice given to the Land Registry by any person with an interest in particular land to ensure that no action is taken in respect of the land without the person's knowledge</p> <p>ii) Warning, given by a Police Officer, to a person charged with an offence</p> <p>iii) Warning, given by a Police Officer, instead of a charge</p>
Caveat	A notice given to the registrar that effectively prevents action by another party without first notifying the party entering the caveat
Certificate of Legal Aid Costs	A certificate of costs allowed following taxation by a judicial or taxing officer (Previously referred to as an Allocatur)
Cessate	A grant of representation of limited duration which has ceased and expired
Chambers	<p>i) Private room, or Court from which the public are excluded in which a District Judge or Judge may conduct certain sorts of hearings</p> <p>ii) Offices used by a barrister</p>
Chancery Division	see High Court
Charge	A formal accusation against a person that a criminal offence has been committed
Charging Order	An order directing that a charge be registered at the Land Registry on property owned by the debtor. This is also a form of enforcing civil debt. An order preventing the sale or disposal of a property until the charge has been cleared
Circuit Judge	A judge who sits in the County Court and/or Crown Court
Civil	Matters concerning private rights and not offences against the state
Civil Justice Reforms	The result of the Access to Justice report by Lord Woolf The aim is to provide more effective access to Justice through quicker, cheaper and more proportionate justice for defended cases It introduced a unified set of Rules and Practice Directions for the County and High Courts, and Judicial Case Management The reforms came into effect on 26 April 1999
Claim	Proceedings issued in the County or High Court. Previously know as an Action
Claimant	The person issuing the claim. Previously known as the Plaintiff
Claim form	The form that a claim is issued on. Previously known as a Summons
Codicil	An addendum signed and executed which amends or adds something to a will
Commissioner of Oaths	Solicitors authorised by the Lord Chancellor to administer oaths and affirmations to a statement of evidence
Committal	<p>i) Committal for trial: Following examination by the Magistrates of a case involving and indictable or either way offence, the procedure of directing the case to the Crown Court to be dealt with</p> <p>ii) Committal for Sentence: Where the Magistrates consider that the offence justifies a sentence greater than they are empowered to</p>

	impose they may commit the defendant to the Crown Court for sentence to be passed by a judge
	iii) Committal Order: An order of the Court committing someone to prison
	iv) Committal Warrant
Common Law	The law established, by precedent, from judicial decisions and established within a community
Compensation	Sum of money to make up for or make amends for loss, breakage, hardship, inconvenience or personal injury caused by another
Concurrent Sentence	A direction by a Court that a number of sentences of imprisonment should run at the same time
Concurrent Writ	A duplicate of the original writ bearing the same date and expiring at the same time as the original
Conditional Discharge	A discharge of a convicted defendant without sentence on condition that he/she does not re-offend within a specified period of time
Conduct Money	i) Money paid to a witness in advance of the hearing of a case as compensation for time spent attending Court ii) Commonly used to describe expenses paid to a debtor to cover the costs of traveling to Court
Consecutive Sentence	An order for a subsequent sentence of imprisonment to commence as soon as a previous sentence expires. Can apply to more than two sentences
Contempt of Court	Disobedience or wilful disregard to the judicial process
Contributory Negligence	Partial responsibility of a claimant for the injury in respect of which he/she claims damages
Co-respondent	A person named as an adulterer (or third person) in a petition for divorce
Corroboration	Evidence by one person confirming that of another or supporting evidence, for example forensic evidence (bloodstain, fibres etc) in murder cases
Counsel	A Barrister
Count	An individual offence set out in an indictment
Counterclaim	A claim made by a defendant against a claimant in an action. There is no limit imposed on a counterclaim, but a fee is payable according to the amount counterclaimed
County Court	Sometimes inaccurately referred to as the Small Claims Court, County Courts deal with civil matters including all monetary claims up to £15,000. Many County Courts have extra powers which enable them to deal with divorce and other family proceedings, bankruptcy actions, matters relating to children and cases involving ships and boats known as admiralty actions. Some County Courts are also branch offices of the High Court known as District registries
Court	Body with judicial powers
Court of Appeal	Divided into:

- i) civil and,
- ii) criminal divisions and hears appeals:
 - i) from decision in the High Court and County Courts and,
 - ii) against convictions or sentences passed by the Crown Court, (see also Public trustee Monies held in Court, in the name of the Accountant General, for suitors, minors, Court of Protection patients etc)

Court of Protection	The branch of the High Court with jurisdiction over the estates of people mentally incapable of handling their own financial affairs
Court room	The room in which cases are heard
Covenant	A formal agreement or a contract constituting an obligation to perform an act
Creditor	A person to whom money is owed by a debtor
Criminal	Person who has been found guilty of a criminal offence
Crown Court	The Crown Court deals with all crime committed for trial by Magistrates Courts. Cases for trial are heard before a judge and jury. The Crown Court also acts as an appeal Court for cases heard and dealt with by the Magistrates. The Crown Court can also deal with some civil and family matters.

The Crown Court is divided into tiers, depending on the type of work dealt with.

First Tier

- Defended High Court Civil work.
- All classes of offence in criminal proceedings.
- Committals for sentence from the Magistrates' Court.
- Appeals against convictions and sentences imposed at Magistrates' Court.

Second Tier

- All classes of offence in criminal proceedings.
- Committals for sentence from Magistrates' Court.
- Appeals against convictions and sentences imposed at Magistrates' Court.

Third Tier

- Class 4 offences only in criminal proceedings.
- Committals for sentence from Magistrates' Court.
- Appeals against convictions and sentences.

D

Damages	An amount of money claimed as compensation for physical/material loss, e.g. personal injury, breach of contract
Debtor	Person owing money to another party
Decree	An order of the Court in proceedings commenced by petition

Decree Absolute	A final certificate, resulting from an application, dissolving a marriage
Decree Nisi	Order for divorce unless cause to contrary is shown within a set period
Declaration	Court order setting out the rights of a party in the form of a statement
Deed	A legal document which sets out the terms of an agreement, which is signed by both parties
Default Judgment	Obtained by the claimant as a result of the failure of a defendant to comply with the requirements of a claim i.e. reply or pay within a 14 day period after service of the claim
Defendant	Person sued; person standing trial or appearing for sentence
Deponent	Person giving evidence by affidavit
Deposition	A statement of evidence written down and sworn on oath, or by affirmation
Designated Civil Judge	A Judge designated to deal with the Civil Justice Reforms for a group of courts
Detailed Assessment (of costs)	Where costs are dealt with by the drawing of a bill of costs
Determination	Act of scrutinising a bill of costs in criminal proceedings to see if the work done and amount claimed is reasonable
Devi	Person to whom freehold land is given by a will
Disability	The inability of a person to handle their own affairs (e.g. through mental illness or a minor under 18 years of age) which prevents involvement in civil legal proceedings without representation
Discovery of documents	Mutual exchange of evidence and all relevant information held by each party relating to the case
Discontinuance	Notice given by the Court, on instruction by the claimant, that they no longer wish to proceed with the case
Dismissal	To make order or decision that a claim be ceased
District Judge	A judicial officer of the Court whose duties involve hearing applications made within proceedings and final hearings subject to any limit of jurisdiction Previously known as Registrars
District Registrar	see District Judge
District Registry	see High Court
Divisional Court	As well as having an original jurisdiction of their own, all three divisions of the High Court have appellate jurisdiction to hear appeals from lower Courts and tribunals. The Divisional Court of the Chancery Division deals with appeals in bankruptcy matters from the County Court. The Divisional Court of the Queen's Bench Division deals largely with certain appeals on points of law from many Courts. The Divisional Court of the Family Division deals largely with appeals from Magistrates Courts in matrimonial matters

	a 'next friend' or 'guardian ad litem'
Divorce	Dissolution or nullity of marriage
Dock	Enclosure in criminal Court for the defendant on trial

E

Either-way Offence	An offence for which the accused may elect the case to be dealt with either summarily by the magistrates or by committal to the Crown Court to be tried by jury
Enforcement	Method of pursuing a civil action after judgment has been made in favour of a party. Process carried out by Magistrates Court to collect fines and other monetary orders made in the Crown Court
Entry of Judgment	Decision of the Court in favour of one or other of the parties
Estate	The rights and assets of a person in property
Execution	Seizure of debtors goods following non payment of a Court order
Executor	A person or persons specified to carry out the provisions of a will
Exempt	To be freed from liability or allegiance
Exhibit	Item or document referred to in an affidavit or used as evidence during a Court trial or hearing
Expert Witness	Person employed to give evidence on a subject in which they are qualified or have expertise

F

Family Division	see High Court
Fast Track	The path that defended claims of more than £5000 but not more than £15000 are allocated to
Fee	Monies payable on issue of an claim or subsequent process
Fiat	A decree or command
Fieri-Facias (FI-FA)	High Court version of warrant of execution in County Court. A directive by a High Court to a sheriff to seize sufficient goods of a debtor to satisfy judgment debt

G

Garnishee	A summons issued by a plaintiff, against a third party, for seizure of money or other assets in their keeping, but belonging to the defendant
Guarantor	Someone who promises to make payment for another if payment is not made by the person responsible for making the repayments of a loan or hire purchase agreement
Guardian	A person appointed to safeguard/protect/manage the interests of a child or person under mental disability

H

High Court	A civil Court which consists of three divisions:-
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- i) Queen's Bench (can be known as King's Bench Division if a King is assuming the throne) - civil disputes for recovery of money, including breach of contract, personal injuries, libel/slander;
- ii) Family - concerned with matrimonial matters and proceedings relating to children, e.g. wardship;
- iii) Chancery - property matters including fraud and bankruptcy

I

Indictable Offence	A criminal offence triable only by the Crown Court. The different types of offence are classified 1, 2, 3 or 4. Murder is a class 1 offence
Infant	Also known as a minor: A person under 18 years of age which prevents them from acting on their own behalf in legal proceedings
Injunction	An order by a Court either restraining a person or persons from carrying out a course of action or directing a course of action be complied with. Failure to carry out terms of the order may be punishable by imprisonment
Inspection of Documents	Following disclosure of each parties documents by discovery, the arrangements made by the parties to allow mutual exchange and copying of documents
Interlocutory	Interim, pending a full order/decision, e.g. interlocutory judgment for damages pending further hearing to assess amount to be awarded and entered as final judgment
Interpleader	A claim by a third party to ownership of goods levied upon under a warrant of execution which is disputed by a creditor. The Court then issues an interpleader summons for the parties to attend Court to adjudicate on rightful ownership
Intestate	Without leaving a will
Issue	To initiate legal proceedings in pursuit of a claim

J

Judge	An officer appointed to administer the law and who has authority to hear and try cases in a Court of law
Judgment	Final decision of a Court A monetary judgment requires the payment of a sum of money by one party to another
Judicial/Judiciary	i) Relating to the Administration of justice or to the judgment of a Court ii) A judge or other officer empowered to act as a judge
Junior Counsel	A member of the bar: the branch of the legal profession which has rights of audience before all Courts
Jurat	A statement contained at the conclusion of an affidavit which states the name of the person giving the evidence, the name of the person before whom and the place where the oath or affirmation was taken
Juror	A person who has been summoned by a Court to be a member of the jury

Jury	Body of jurors sworn to reach a verdict according to the evidence in a Court
Justice of the Peace	A lay magistrate - person appointed to administer judicial business in a Magistrates Court. Also sits in the Crown Court with a judge or recorder to hear appeals and committals for sentence
Jurisdiction	The area and matters over which a Court has legal authority
Juvenile	Person under 17 years of age
L	
Landlord and Tenant Act	Act which empowers applications (seeking extension of a lease or some other action concerning tenancy)
Law	The system made up of rules established by an act of parliament, custom or practice enjoining or prohibiting certain action
Law Lords	Describes the judges of the House of Lords who are known as the Lords of Appeal in ordinary
Leading junior counsel	A senior barrister who deals with more serious cases, but not a QC.
Lease	The letting of land or tenements, e.g. rent etc, for property for a prescribed period
Legal Aid	Facility for the fees and expenses of counsel, solicitors or other legal representatives retained by those of modest means to be paid from a fund administered by the Legal Aid Board
Legal Personal Representative	The person to whom a grant of probate or letters of ADMINISTRATION has been issued
Legatee	Person to whom personal estate is given by will
Letters of Administration	Authority granted by a Probate Registry to someone interested in the estate of a person who has died without leaving a will. The order allows the 'administrator' to carry out the duties relating to the estate
Levy	(A duty carried out by a bailiff or sheriff under the authority of a warrant or writ of fi-fa, for a sum of money whereby goods of value belonging to the debtor are claimed with a view to removal and sale at a public auction in an attempt to obtain payment)
Libel	A written and published statement/article which infers damaging remarks on a persons reputation
Licence	Permission to carry out an act that would otherwise be considered illegal
Lien	A legal right to withhold the goods/property of another until payment is made
Listing Questionnaire	This form is used to ensure that all issues are resolved and that the parties are ready for trial. Used for Fast track and Multi track claims only
Litigation	Legal proceedings
Long Vacation	Period between 1 August and 30 September in each year during which there are only restricted High Court sittings for urgent matters

Lord Chancellor	The cabinet minister who acts as speaker of the House of Lords and oversees the hearings of the Law Lords. Additional responsibilities include supervising the procedure of Courts other than Magistrates or Coroners Courts and selection of judges, magistrates, queens counsel and members of tribunals
Lord Chief Justice	Senior judge of the Court of Appeal (Criminal Division) who also heads the Queens Bench Division of the High Court of Justice)
Lord Justice of Appeal	Title given to certain judges sitting in the Court of Appeal

M

Magistrates Court	A Court where criminal proceedings are commenced before justices of the peace who examine the evidence/statements and either deal with the case themselves or commit to the Crown Court for trial or sentence. Also has jurisdiction in a range of civil matters
Maintenance Pending Suit	A temporary order for financial provision made within divorce proceedings until such time as the proceedings are finalised (i.e. by issue of the Decree Absolute)
Master	Judicial officer of the High Court in the Royal Courts of Justice who normally deals with preliminary matters before trial
Master of the Rolls	Senior judge of the Court of Appeal (Civil Division)
Matter	Proceedings commenced by way of originating application
Mesne Profits	Sum of money claimed by the owner of property against someone not legally entitled to be in possession. Calculated from the date the notice to quit expires until the date possession is given up
Minor	Someone below 18 years of age and unable to sue or be sued without representation, other than for wages. A minor sues by a next friend and defends by a guardian
Mitigation	Reasons submitted on behalf of a guilty party in order to excuse or partly excuse the offence committed in an attempt to minimise the sentence
Mortgage	A loan of money advanced to purchase property. The transfer of the property is withheld as security for payment
Mortgagor	The party obtaining the loan
Mortgagee	The party that advances the loan
Motion	An application by one party to the High Court for an order in their favour
Multi Track	The path that defended claims over £15000 are allocated to

N

Next Friend	A person representing a minor or mental patient who is involved in legal proceedings
Non-Molestation	An order within an injunction to prevent one person physically attacking another

Non-Suit	Proceedings where the plaintiff has failed to establish to the Court's satisfaction that there is a case for the defendant to answer
Notary Public	Someone who is authorised to swear oaths and certify the execution of deeds
Notice of Issue	Notice sent by a Court to the claimant giving notification of the case number allocated to their action and details of fees paid. Confirms date of service
Notice to Quit	Gives prior notice, when served in possession proceedings, of termination of a tenancy
Nullity	Application to the Court for a declaration that a marriage be declared 'void' or be annulled i.e. declared never to have existed or to have subsisted until the Court dissolved it
O	
Oath	A verbal promise by a person with religious beliefs to tell the truth
Official Receiver	A civil servant who works for the Department of trade and Industry and is appointed by the Court to act as:- i) a liquidator when a company is being wound up; ii) a trustee when an individual is made bankrupt. The duties of an official receiver will include examining the company/bankrupt's property which is available to pay the debts and distributing the money amongst the creditors
Official Solicitor	A solicitor or barrister appointed by the Lord Chancellor and working in the Lord Chancellor's Department. The duties include representing, in legal proceedings, people who are incapable of looking after their own affairs i.e. children/persons suffering from mental illness
Oral Examination	A method of questioning a person under oath before an officer of the Court to obtain details of their financial affairs
Order	A direction by a Court
Originating Application	A method of commencing proceedings under the authority of a specific act of parliament, e.g. Landlord and Tenant Act, whereby the applicant asks the Court to grant an order in their favour
Ouster	An order within an injunction to force a person to leave a property
P	
Particulars	Details relevant to a claim
Party	Any of the participants in a Court action or proceedings
Party and Party	Costs that one party must pay to another
Patient	A person who is deemed incapable of handling his/her own affairs by reason of mental incapacity and who is under the jurisdiction of the Court of Protection
Penal Notice	Directions attached to an order of a Court stating the penalty for disobedience may result in imprisonment

Personal Application	Application made to the Court without legal representation
Personal Service Petition	Personal delivery (i.e. not by mail) of a claim, summons or notice A method of commencing proceedings whereby the order required by the petitioner from the Court is expressed as a prayer, e.g. the petitioner therefore prays that the marriage be dissolved (divorce proceedings)
Petitioner	A person who presents the petition
Plaintiff	see Claimant
Plaint Note	See Notice of Issue
Plaint Number	Old-fashioned term for Claim Number
Plea	A defendant's reply to a charge put to him by a court; i.e. guilty or not guilty
Pleading	Documents setting out claim/defence of parties involved in civil proceedings
Possession Proceedings	Legal proceedings by a landlord to recover land/property i.e. house, flat, garage etc
Power of Arrest	An order attached to some injunctions to allow the police to arrest a person who has broken the terms of the order
Precedent	The decision of a case which established principles of law that act as an authority for future cases of a similar nature
President of the Family Division	Senior judge and head of the family Division of the High Court of Justice
Pre-trial Review	A preliminary appointment at which the DISTRICT Judge consider the issues before the Court and fixes the timetable for the trial
Probate	The legal recognition of the validity of a will
Process	The document commencing a claim or subsequent action
Prosecution	The institution or conduct of criminal proceedings against a person
Prosecutor	Person who prosecutes
Public trustee	A person (usually a barrister or solicitor) appointed by the Lord Chancellor as i) trustee for trusts managed by the Public trust Office; ii) Accountant General for Court Funds; iii) Receiver (of last resort) for Court of Protection patients
Puisne Judge	(Pronounced Puny) High Court judge. Any judge of the High Court other than the heads of each division. The word puisne means junior and is used to distinguish High Court judges from senior judges sitting at the Court of Appeal
Putative Father	The alleged or supposed father of an illegitimate child
Q	
QC	See Queen's Counsel
Quash	To annul; i.e. to declare no longer valid
Quantum	In a damages claim the amount to be determined by the court

Queens Bench Division	see High Court
Queen's Counsel	Barristers of at least ten years standing may apply to become queen's counsel. QCs undertake work of an important nature and are referred to as 'silks' which is derived from the Courts gown that is worn. Will be known as king's counsel if a king assumes the throne

R

Receiver	Person appointed by the Court of Protection to act on behalf of a patient
Recognisance	An undertaking before the Court by which a person agrees to comply with a certain condition, e.g. keep the peace/appear in court. A sum of money is normally pledged to ensure compliance
Recorder	(also Assistant Recorder) Members of the legal profession (barristers or solicitors) who are appointed to act in a judicial capacity on a part time bases. They may progress to become a full time judge
Redetermination	An application by a solicitor or counsel for amounts assessed by determination to be reconsidered
Registrar	Registrars and deputy registrars were renamed DISTRICT Judges and Deputy DISTRICT Judges respectively in the Courts and Legal Services Act 1990
Remand	To order an accused person to be kept in custody or placed on bail pending further Court appearance
Respondent	The person on whom a petition or originating application is served
Right of Audience	Entitlement to appear before a Court in a legal capacity and conduct proceedings on behalf of a party to the proceedings

S

Service	Delivery by post or personal service of the claim, or other court documents
Sheriff	An officer of the Crown whose duties, amongst other things, consist of the enforcement of High Court writs of execution
SILK	Queens Counsel, a senior barrister sometimes referred to as a leader or leading counsel
SLANDER	Spoken words which have a damaging effect on a person's reputation
Small Claims Track	The path that defended claims of no more than £5000 (and Personal Injury and Housing Disrepair claims of no more than £1000) are allocated to
Solicitor	Member of the legal profession chiefly concerned with advising clients and preparing their cases and representing them in some Courts. May also act as advocates before certain Courts or tribunals
Specified Claim	A type of claim which is issued for a fixed amount of money

	allegedly owing. Previously known as a liquidated claim
Squatter	A person occupying land or property without the owners consent
Statement	A written account by a witness of the facts of details of a matter
Statutory Instrument	A document issued by the delegated authority (usually a Government Minister or committee) named within an act of parliament which affects the workings of the original Act, e.g. The County Courts Act 1984 confers authority on to the County Court Rule Committee to make rules relating to the operation of the County Courts act
Stay of Execution	An order following which judgment cannot be enforced without leave of the court
Stipendiary Magistrate	A legally qualified and salaried Magistrate
Subpoena	A summons issued to a person directing their attendance in Court to give evidence
Suit	Legal proceedings commenced by petition
Suitor	Person bringing a suit before the Courts
Summary Assessment (of costs)	Where the question of costs is dealt with at the conclusion of the hearing
Summary Judgment	Judgment obtained by a plaintiff where there is no defence to the case or the defence contains no valid grounds
Summary Offence	A criminal offence which is triable only by a Magistrates Court
Summing-up	A review of the evidence and directions as to the law by a judge immediately before a jury retires to consider its verdict
Summons	Order to appear or to produce evidence to a Court Also the old name for a claim form
Summons (Jury)	Order to attend for jury service
Summons (Witness)	Order to appear as a witness at a hearing
Supreme Court of Judicature	Collective name encompassing - High Court of Justice, Crown Court and Court of Appeal
Surety	A person's undertaking to be liable for another's default or non-attendance at Court
Suspended Sentence	A custodial sentence which will not take effect unless there is a subsequent offence within a specified period
T	
Taxation of Costs	An examination of a solicitor's bill in civil proceedings by a Court to ensure that all charges against the legal aid fund are fair and reasonable which are also examined by a Court)
Testor	A person who makes a will
Tipstaff	An officer of the Supreme Court whose duties involve the enforcement of High Court arrest warrants
Tort	A civil wrong committed against a person for which compensation

	may be sought through a civil Court, e.g. personal injury, negligent driving, libel etc
Trial Window	A period of time within which the case must be listed for trial
Tribunal	A group of people consisting of a chairman (normally solicitor/barrister) and others who exercise a judicial function to determine matters related to specific interests, e.g. VAT tribunal - appeals against the amount of duty levied by Customs and Excise Lands tribunal - appeals against the valuation of land
Trust	Property legally entrusted to a person with instructions to use it for another person (or persons benefit)
Trustee	A person who holds or administers property in a trust for another (or others)
U	
Unspecified Claim	A claim where the amount to be awarded is left to the Court to determine, e.g. damages to be assessed for personal injuries. Previously known as an unliquidated claim
V	
Verdict	The finding of guilty or not guilty by a jury
Vice Chancellor	Senior judge and head of the Chancery Division of the High Court of Justice (although the Lord Chancellor is the nominal head)
W	
Walking Possession	A signed agreement by a debtor not to remove goods levied by a bailiff under the authority of a warrant of execution and to allow the bailiff access at any time to inspect the goods, in consideration of which the bailiff leaves the goods in the possession of the debtor
Ward of Court	The title given to a minor who is the subject of a wardship order. The order ensures that custody of the minor is held by the Court with day to day care of the minor being carried out by an individual(s) or local authority. As long as the minor remains a ward of Court, all decisions regarding the minors upbringing must be approved by the Court, e.g. transfer to a different school, medical treatment etc
Wardship	High Court action making a minor a ward of court
Warrant of Committal	Method of enforcing an order of the Court whereby the penalty for failing to comply with its terms is imprisonment; the bailiff is authorised to carry out the arrest and deliver the person to prison (or in some instances the Court)
Warrant of Delivery	Method of enforcing a judgment for the return of goods (or value of the goods) whereby a bailiff is authorised to recover the goods (or their value) from the debtor and return them to the creditor
Warrant of	Method of enforcing a judgment for a sum of money whereby a

Execution	bailiff is authorised, in lieu of payment, to seize and remove goods belonging to a defendant for sale at public auction
Warrant of Possession	Method of enforcing a judgment for possession of a property whereby a bailiff is authorised to evict people and secure against re-entry
Warrant of Restitution	A remedy available following illegal re-entry of premises by persons evicted under a warrant of possession. The bailiff is authorised to evict all occupants found on the premises and re-deliver the premises to the plaintiff
Will	A declaration of a person's intentions to distribute his/her estate and assets
Winding up	The voluntary or compulsory closure of a company and the subsequent realisation of assets and payment to creditors
Witness	A person who gives evidence in Court
Writ of Summons	(see Claim)