As most courts have now fully transitioned to e-filing, litigators are presented with an opportunity to significantly improve the way a judge interacts with their briefs, in turn making it easier for the judge to adopt their position.

What is a hyperlinked brief/ebrief?

A hyperlinked brief (sometimes called an e-brief) is a brief that has [citations that are hyperlinked](https://www.typelaw.com/blog/making-better-briefs-with-hyperlinks/) to make it easy for the reader to click on a citation to quickly navigate to the material being cited.

Why is a hyperlinked brief important?

Adding [pin-point hyperlinks to citations](https://www.typelaw.com/hyperlinking/) creates a smooth experience for the reader to quickly jump from your brief to the specific portion of the case (or other authority) you are citing to, and back.

When a judge needs to stop mid-brief to manually search and pull up the case you are citing, then find the specific paragraph within that case, you’ve lost their attention and focus for 30-60 seconds or more in the middle of your argument. Once they do find it and get back to your brief, they’ve probably lost the flow of thought you’ve so carefully laid out for them.

Hyperlinked brief vs non-hyperlinked brief

Different types of hyperlinked briefs

There are different types of hyperlinked briefs. These differences can be broken down into a combination of the *extent of citations hyperlinked* and the *types of links used*.

***Extent of citations hyperlinked***

1. Briefs that only contains links to authority.
2. Briefs that only contain links to the record.
3. Briefs that contain links to authority and to the record (this is often called an e-brief).

***Types of links used***

1. *Internal links*: Embedding a PDF of source material into the brief PDF and creating links that navigate *internally* to these parts of the brief. This results in a huge PDF file that usually exceeds the file size limitations of e-filing portals and may cause performance issues when reading on an underpowered iPad/tablet.
2. *External links*: Adding links to an *external* website that hosts a copy of the cited source material (e.g. CaseText, WestLaw, or LexisNexis). We prefer hyperlinking to a service where you do not need a login/account to view the cited source material. The “paywall” imposed by some services can sometimes lead to issues/delays when trying to quickly open a cited authority.

Recommendations when hyperlinking your brief

Now that you understand the value of [hyperlinking your brief](https://www.typelaw.com/hyperlinking/) and the different ways that you can hyperlink your citations, here are some tips when creating your hyperlinked briefs:

1. Create links to the specific page/pin of the source you are citing. This extra effort goes a long way and is appreciated by the court.
2. Add links to the record to further improve the reader’s experience.
3. Use hyperlinks to external websites instead of embedding source material PDFs into your brief.
4. Use paywall-free legal research hosting websites.

Hyperlink to the authority and to the record

Hyperlinks are [highly recommended by most courts](https://www.typelaw.com/a-guide-to-citation-hyperlinking-requirements-in-state-and-federal-courts/), and even required by some. At TypeLaw, we’ve built an AI-powered service that can quickly hyperlink your cites to authority and the record.

For hyperlinks to authority, we prefer citing to publicly available sources, as this allows the reader to bypass any “paywall” restrictions. For citations to the record, we’ve built a platform that securely hosts and quickly opens up a specific cited page without having to wait to download the whole document.

[Watch a short video](https://www.typelaw.com/hyperlinks-video/) to learn more about how TypeLaw hyperlinking works.

# Digital Legal Briefs with Hyperlinks

Hyperlinks are a small, but mighty feature of digital briefs. They can either be *internal*(link to a different section of the same brief PDF), or *external*(link to a case authority, on a website like CaseText/Westlaw/LexisNexis, or to the record).

All relevant documents one click away

Using internal and external hyperlinks, one digital brief can bring together all of the relevant documents related to a case. This ability to have all files related to a case one click away is invaluable to the entire legal ecosystem (attorneys, judges, court staff, paralegals, clients), where time and access to information is essential.

The ABA has made the recommendation that hyperlinked briefs be allowed to be submitted as the brief of record for all courts. At TypeLaw, we knew that [automating hyperlinking](https://www.typelaw.com/how-it-works) would be essential to our clients’ success transitioning into the world of digital briefs.

Hyperlinks are easy for the court to verify and help the court understand the arguments in your brief. In the core areas of brief hyperlinks, the ABA outlines these benefits to attorneys and the courts:

* **Legal citations by filers**
  + Provides immediate access to legal authorities cited in standard citation format
  + Directs to legal research platforms or websites accessible to all users
  + Directs to key legal authorities in the appendix to adhere to file limits in a single PDF
* **Record citations by filers**
  + Provides immediate access to cited items in trial court record
  + Connects citations between the brief and appendix within a single PDF file
  + Provides direct access to an externally stored trial court records without affecting file size limits
* **Authorized internet sites** **(i.e., Westlaw, LEXIS, Casetext)**
  + Provides direct access to external sites used across court systems
  + Allows for internet cited material to be included as a copy in the appendix for reference, avoiding dead links and errors

Hyperlink to authority and to the record

Given the current landscape where [federal and state courts vary greatly in their requirements](https://www.typelaw.com/blog/a-guide-to-citation-hyperlinking-requirements-in-state-and-federal-courts/) for filers to hyperlink in brief filings, TypeLaw is focused on providing a cohesive experience for our customers.

Each case, statute, and constitution cited in your brief, as well as the record, can be easily hyperlinked to a URL available on the web, and used in any court across the country.