

Law School Internship



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What is an internship?

An internship is a short-term, structured opportunity for students or graduates to gain hands-on experience, apply academic learning, and understand professional work environments.

For law students, internships bridge theory and practice, offering insights into the legal field, sharpening skills, and helping define career goals not just enhancing resumes.

REGULATORY REQUIREMENT:

According to the Bar Council of India (BCI) under Rule 25 of the Legal Education Rules, 2008:

- Students in a 5-year Integrated LL.B. Program must complete a minimum of 20 weeks of internship during the course.
- Students in a 3-year LL.B. Program must complete at least 12 weeks of internship.

Why Internships Matter?



Practical Learning & Career Clarity

- Apply classroom knowledge to real-world legal practice.
- Work on actual cases, client interactions, drafting, and research.
- Explore diverse fields corporate law, litigation, policy, human rights, etc.
- Identify areas of interest while eliminating unsuitable career paths.



Skill Development & Building a Strong CV

- Enhance critical skills: legal research, drafting, oral and written communication, time management, and teamwork.
- Develop professional competence and adaptability.
- Strengthen academic profile with credible practical experience.



Networking & Mentorship

- Build meaningful connections with lawyers, judges, professors, and peers.
- Networking often opens doors to job opportunities, references, and long-term guidance.
- Demonstrates initiative and commitment beyond academics.



Enhanced Career Opportunities & Job Readiness

- *Learn workplace ethics: deadlines, client confidentiality, hierarchy, and professionalism.*
- *Experience different work cultures and practice settings.*
- *Many law firms and organizations extend Pre-Placement Offers (PPOs) to interns who perform well.*
- *Positions you as a "job-ready" candidate right after graduation.*

Types of Internships



NGOs, Legal Aid, Grassroot Organizations

- Work with organizations dedicated to various causes like human rights, environmental law, gender justice, child rights etc.
- Gain exposure to areas such as refugee law and public interest litigation through meaningful legal engagement.



Internships with Trial & Appellate Advocates & Courts

- Gain courtroom experience by working with practicing advocates in Lower Courts, High Courts, or the Supreme Court.
- Assist in legal drafting, research, and client interactions to build practical legal skills.



Judicial Internships

- Intern with judges in trial courts, High Courts, or the Supreme Court to observe court proceedings firsthand.
- Assist in legal research and case briefings to deepen understanding of judicial processes.



Legal Regulatory Authorities -Year 3-4

- Experience the functioning of statutory bodies that regulate key sectors of law and the economy.
- Examples include SEBI, TRAI, CCI, and NHRC, offering insight into regulatory frameworks and policy enforcement.



Legislature & Parliamentary Internships

- Contribute to legislative research, bill tracking, and drafting speeches for lawmakers.
- Gain insight into parliamentary procedures and the law-making process.





Market & Financial Institutions

- Understand how law intersects with commerce, banking, and investment sectors.
- Intern with bodies like NSE, RBI, IRDAI, or arbitration councils to explore regulatory and financial legal frameworks.



Law Firm Internships

- Intern with law firms specializing in corporate law, intellectual property, M&A, taxation, or litigation.
- Gain practical experience in legal processes, client handling, and case management within specialized practice areas.



In-House Corporate Internships

- Work with corporate legal departments to learn about compliance, contracts, labour laws, and governance.
- Eg. include Reliance Industries, Infosys, Tata Group, and HDFC Legal.



Policy & Think Tank Internships

- Engage in legal policy-making and research.
- Participate in advocacy to influence law and social change.



University-Stipulated or Research Internships

- Work under professors or university legal research centers.
- Contribute to faculty-led projects to deepen academic and practical legal knowledge.

II. Eligibility & Timing

- **When to Start:** Begin internships from the 1st year itself. Every academic break should ideally be utilized.
- **Structured Progression:** Move from basic exposure (NGOs, legal aid, court visits) in early years to specialized law firms, corporates, or judicial clerkships in later years.

Prerequisites:

- *Most internships don't mandate a minimum GPA, but good academic performance improves perception and opportunities.*
- *Some law firms and corporates may set specific GPA cut-offs.*

III. Modes & Structures of Internships



Paid & Unpaid:

- Early-stage, NGO, and government internships are usually unpaid.
- Tier-1 firms and corporates may offer stipends in later years.



Remote & On-site:

- Increasing remote opportunities (policy, research, NGOs).
- Courts, chambers, and law firms generally require physical presence.



Full-time & Part-time:

- Mostly full-time during vacations.
- Some semester-long, part-time opportunities exist (especially research work).



Academic Credit-Based:

Certain universities tie internships with clinical courses or projects.



Research & Industry:

- Research: Professors, NLU centres, think tanks.
- Industry: Law firms, corporates, PSUs.

IV. How to Find Internships

- **College Placement Cell:** First point of contact; verified and streamlined process.
- **Online Portals:** Manupatra Academy, LinkedIn, Naukri, Internshala, law-specific forums.
- **Networking:** Reach out via alumni, professors, seniors, conferences, and LinkedIn.
- **Cold Emailing:** Write personalized, well-structured emails to chambers, firms, and professors with CV + tailored cover letter.
- **Company Websites:** Many law firms and corporates list internship openings under "Careers" pages.

V. Typical Application Process

Documents Needed:

CV (1–2 pages, crisp).

Writing Samples (especially for research roles).

Cover Letter (customized for role/firm).

Recommendation Letter (only if specifically required).

Timeline: Apply 2–3 months in advance for reputed firms/organizations.

VII. Do.s of Internships

Expectations

- Punctuality, accountability, confidentiality, and attention to detail.

Professionalism

- Follow dress code, maintain decorum, and be responsive.

Communication:

- Provide updates to your supervisor.
- Ask clarifying questions without hesitation.
- Keep a logbook/report of tasks.

Deliverables

- *Ensure you meet timelines. If you are delayed inform in advance. Focus on quality over quantity.*

7. Don.ts of Internships

✗ Don't skip workdays without permission.

✗ Don't disclose confidential matters.

✗ Don't stay passive — proactively ask for tasks.

✗ Don't mass-apply with generic emails.

✗ Don't send untailored CVs/cover letters.

✗ Don't treat internships as mere "CV fillers."

Pro Tips for Success



Start early — competitive internships fill up quickly.



Treat every internship like a long job interview — reputation matters.



Maintain a bank of writing samples for research roles.








Don't chase only "big names" — focus on quality learning and mentorship.



Year Wise Sequestration

YEAR	GOAL
Year 1 – Foundation & Exploration	<p>Goal: Understand the legal system and build exposure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Court visits, observerships, shadowing advocates in District/High Court. • Attend proceedings to learn court etiquette & procedure • Intern with NGOs/legal aid cells (human rights, environment, social justice). • Assist faculty in basic research tasks. <p>Skills: Legal research, drafting basics, communication.</p>
Year 2 – Broadening Horizons	<p>Goal: Explore different areas of law & organizational structures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intern at Tier-2/3 or boutique firms (drafting, due diligence, client work). • In-house internships (compliance, contracts). • Intern at Commissions/quasi-judicial bodies. • Participate in legal aid & pro bono projects. <p>Skills: Drafting petitions, memo writing, case summarization.</p>
Year 3 – Skill Development & Specialization	<p>Goal: Build technical skills & identify interest areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intern at Tier-1/2 firms (corporate, IPR, tax, etc.). • Litigation internships with High Court/senior advocates. • Policy & research organizations (think tanks, law commissions). • Short-term judicial clerkship. <p>Skills: Advanced research, drafting contracts, client interviewing.</p>
Year 4 – Advanced Exposure & Networking	<p>Goal: Position for career pathways & strengthen CV</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Top tier/specialized law firms (practice area focus). • In-house counsel roles in MNCs/PSUs (compliance, arbitration, regulatory). • Long-term judicial/quasi-judicial clerkships. • International opportunities (UN, NGOs, arbitration centers). <p>Skills: Strategy, negotiation, drafting complex contracts, leadership.</p>
Year 5 – Career-Oriented Internships	<p>Goal: Secure PPOs or prepare for litigation/judiciary/academia</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final assessment internships at law firms (PPO-focused). • Litigation offices (Supreme Court/reputed chambers). • Long-term judicial clerkship (judiciary/academia track). • Research internships with universities, journals, legislative bodies. <p>Skills: Specialization, networking, publication, leadership.</p>

General Tips (Applicable Across All Years)

-  **Apply Early:** Most reputed internships require 3-6 months advance application.
-  **Documentation:** Maintain an internship diary/logbook.
-  **Networking:** Build mentor relationships with seniors, professors, and professionals.
-  **Balance:** Mix litigation, corporate, NGO, and policy work to stay versatile.
-  **Publications & Moots:** Complement internships with research papers and moot court participation.

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