

*General Jury Instructions**
(for use in civil and criminal trials)

[1] Members of the jury, the evidence and arguments in this case have been completed, and I now will instruct you as to the law.

[2] The law that applies to this case is stated in these instructions and it is your duty to follow all of them. You must not single out certain instructions and disregard others.

[3] It is your duty to determine the facts, and to determine them only from the evidence in this case. You are to apply the law to the facts and in this way decide the case.

[4] Neither sympathy nor prejudice should influence you. [You should not be influenced by any person's race, color, religion, or national ancestry.]

[5] From time to time it has been the duty of the court to rule on the admissibility of evidence. You should not concern yourselves with the reasons for these rulings. You should disregard questions [and exhibits] which were withdrawn or to which objections were sustained.

[6] Any evidence that was received for a limited purpose should not be considered by you for any other purpose.

[7] You should disregard testimony [and exhibits] which the court has refused or stricken.

[8] The evidence which you should consider consists only of the testimony of the witnesses [and the exhibits] which the court has received.

[9] You are the sole judges of the believability of the witnesses and of the weight to be given to the testimony of each of them. In considering the testimony of any witness, you may take into account his ability and opportunity to observe, [his age,] his memory, his manner while testifying, and interest, bias, or prejudice he may have, and the reasonableness of his testimony considered in the light of all the evidence in the case.

[10] You should consider all the evidence in the light of your own observations and experience in life.

[11] Opening statements are made by the attorneys to acquaint you with the facts they expect to prove. Closing arguments are made by the attorneys to discuss the facts and circumstances in the case, and should be confined to the evidence and to reasonable inferences to be drawn from the evidence. Neither opening statements nor closing arguments are evidence, and any statement or argument made by the attorneys which is not based on the evidence should be disregarded.

[12] Faithful performance by you of your duties as jurors is vital to the administration of justice.

*These instructions are taken primarily from Illinois pattern jury instructions.