Lesson 2 — What Is Law? Legal Method First Steps

Law is the body of rules by which a community governs itself, made by its legislatures, declared by its courts, grown in its customs, and gathered in its constitution. Legal method is the craft of finding those rules and using them well.

The sources stand in order: the constitution supreme; statutes beneath it; case law, where the courts' reasons bind by precedent; and customary law in its own field. The lawyer's first question in any problem is: which source governs this?

Practise: take one rule you obeyed today — a traffic rule, a market rule, a school rule — and name its source. That small exercise, repeated daily, builds the lawyer's instinct for authority.

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