

## Simplified Overview of the Structure of South African Courts

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Constitutional Court</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Highest court for all Constitutional matters</li> <li>• One court – sits in Braamfontein</li> <li>• 11 judges headed by Chief Justice</li> <li>• Minimum of eight judges must hear a matter</li> <li>• Preferably not a court of first instance</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Supreme Court of Appeal</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Highest court for all non-Constitutional matters</li> <li>• One court – sits in Bloemfontein</li> <li>• Headed by Judge President</li> <li>• Generally five judges hear a matter, but minimum of three</li> <li>• Only hears appeals</li> </ul>
<p><b>The High Court of South Africa</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A division for each of the nine provinces – some divisions have one court (eg Western Cape) and some several (eg Eastern Cape)</li> <li>• Each division headed by a Judge President</li> <li>• Hears both new matters and appeals</li> <li>• Has unlimited jurisdiction to hear any matter – civil or criminal</li> <li>• Normally one judge hears a new matter and two judges hear an appeal</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Specialised Courts</b></p> <p>There are a number of specialised courts with the same status as a High Court, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Labour Court</li> <li>• Water Tribunal</li> <li>• Tax Court</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Magistrates Court</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Magistrates Court consists of both a Regional and a District Court</li> <li>• SA divided into magisterial districts</li> <li>• There are also a number of regions</li> <li>• One Magistrate hears a matter</li> </ul>	
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Regional Court</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Civil jurisdiction to hear claims between R200 000 and R400 000</li> <li>• Criminal jurisdiction over all matters except treason</li> <li>• Maximum punishment of 15 years or R600 000</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>District Court</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Civil jurisdiction to hear claims up to R200 000</li> <li>• Criminal jurisdiction over all matters except murder, rape &amp; treason</li> <li>• Maximum punishment of three years or R120 000</li> </ul>
<p><b>Small Claims Court</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited jurisdiction in type of cases</li> <li>• Monetary jurisdiction limited to R15 000</li> <li>• Designed to make justice more affordable to the man in the street</li> </ul>	
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; width: 100%;"> <span><i>Inferior Courts</i></span> <span><i>Superior Courts</i></span> </div>	