This chapter examines international humanitarian law, the principal body of international law which applies in times of armed conflict, and which seeks to balance the violence inherent in an armed conflict with the dictates of humanity. International humanitarian law protects the civilian population from the ravages of conflict, and establishes limitations on the means and methods of combat. The chapter is organized as follows. Section 2 considers the nature of international humanitarian law and identifies some of its cardinal principles and key rules. Section 3 explores the similarities and differences between international humanitarian law and international human rights law, comparing and contrasting their historical origins and conceptual approaches. Given that international humanitarian law applies during armed conflict, Section 4 considers whether there is a need for international human rights law also to apply. Section 5 ascertains the relationship between the two bodies of law and
Section 6 considers some of the difficulties with the application of international human rights law in time of armed conflict.

Access to the complete content on Law Trove requires a subscription or purchase. Public users are able to search the site and view the abstracts and keywords for each book and chapter without a subscription.

Please subscribe or login to access full text content.

If you have purchased a print title that contains an access code, please see the information provided with the code or instructions printed within the title for information about how to register your code.

For questions on access or troubleshooting, please check our FAQs, and if you can’t find the answer there, please contact us.