

Most Expensive Criminal Cases in History

Going to court isn't cheap, especially if your case is listed for a lengthy District or Supreme Court trial. And while the rich can afford a good criminal defence team, many struggle to secure a competent defence even when pitted against a well-resourced prosecution.

Large commercial cases can often be the priciest; but perhaps surprisingly, bitter divorce lawsuits involving the ultra-rich are also at the top of the list. In both situations, lawyers are often the only real winners – sapping enormous resources out of their wealthy clients.

Here are some of the most expensive criminal cases from the UK, US and Australia.

UK's Most Expensive Criminal Case: NewsCorp Phone Hacking Scandal

The 2014 NewsCorp phone hacking scandal not only made international headline, but is believed to have [cost a whopping £95 million to run](#), making it the most expensive criminal case in Britain. This figure included court costs, legal fees and the resources ploughed in to the extensive police investigation. The [barrister fees](#) for the trial certainly didn't come cheap, costing £20,000 per day.

The £95 million figure didn't include all costs associated with the scandal. The U.S Securities and Exchange Commission revealed that the investigation had cost Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation a total of £315 million. This included payments to the 718 hacking victims, as well as the legal costs associated with multiple civil and criminal cases. The grand total is estimated to have reached £600 when the cost of redundancy pay-outs and lost revenue were taken into account.

US's Most Expensive Criminal Trial: McMartin Childcare Sexual Assault Case

This disturbing case started when mother Judy Johnson suspected that her three-year-old son had been sexually abused by one of his teachers at the McMartin family's day care centre, and reported the matter to police. Soon after, other parents came forward to report their own suspicions.

The allegations included forcing children to perform in pornographic films, and even the performance of "satanic ritualistic acts" of slaughtering animals in front of the kids before sexually abusing them. Five teachers at the centre were arrested and charged with multiple offences.

The proceedings would become the most expensive in US history, running from 1983 to 1990. But after all that time, the case didn't even reach finality – as [all charges against the defendants were ultimately dropped](#) due to insufficient evidence.

Australia's Most Expensive Criminal Investigation: Claremont Killings

Three young women disappeared from Western Australia almost 20 years ago, sparking the largest and [most expensive criminal investigation in our nation's history](#). Two of the three bodies turned up in bushland, while a third was never found.

Experts were flown in from overseas to assist, and even NASA was called upon to analyse video evidence. The leading investigator, Detective Superintendent Paul Ferguson, took perhaps an even stranger approach: speaking with a convicted serial killer for ideas about how to uncover what happened to the missing women.

But despite the pricey investigation and several promising leads– the mystery remains unsolved to this day.

