Computer-assisted legal research opens the door to an ever-expanding online library with which you will become familiar once you look beyond your casebooks and hornbooks. The Westlaw legal research service is comprehensive, easy to use, and up-to-date. It will help you perform accurate and effective legal research.

On Westlaw, you can quickly search many sources at once and retrieve up-to-date information that might be difficult to find using books. You can also retrieve information that is not yet available in print. For example, U.S. Supreme Court opinions are available on Westlaw within 30 minutes of their release. Perhaps most important of all, Westlaw integrates the most essential research tools from West and provides you with easy, online access.

Although no single research technique is right for every situation, you might start with the Westlaw Research Pyramid and the following Westlaw research tips.

**Westlaw Research Pyramid**

1. Gather background information from secondary sources to understand your issue and to find leads to significant primary law. Recent law review articles and treatises like *American Law Reports* (ALR®) and *American Jurisprudence 2d* (Am Jur® 2d) are a good place to start.

   West topic and key numbers also help you to focus your research and retrieve relevant primary law. Each legal issue in a case published by West is identified, summarized, and assigned a topic and key number by West attorney-editors.

2. Use Westlaw to gather primary sources, the building blocks of legal research. Westlaw provides a current, comprehensive collection of primary authority, such as cases, statutes, regulations, and other administrative documents.

3. Update your research with KeyCite®, West’s citation research service. Check each case or statute you intend to rely on in KeyCite before continuing your research.
Starting Your Research
Law review articles can serve as an introduction to a new topic, a source of terminology you can use to formulate a search, and a tool to lead you to pertinent primary authority, such as cases and statutes.

Use the American Law Reports database (ALR) to find a thorough discussion of case law relating to a particular legal issue. Attorneys who write ALR annotations have already analyzed the available American cases on the issue and have prepared a detailed discussion of the legal principles deduced from the cases. The American Jurisprudence 2d database (AMJUR) contains the full text of Am Jur 2d, a comprehensive encyclopedia of state and federal law on more than 400 topics.

If you find a useful case, use the topic and key numbers in the case to find other cases on point. You can also use the online West Key Number Digest to search for key numbers on a particular topic.

Starting a Westlaw Session
Follow these steps to access Westlaw:


2. Click Westlaw Research at the top of the page, then type your password in the Westlaw Password text box in the Sign On section. Alternatively, type your personalized username and password in the appropriate text boxes.

3. Click Sign On.

A message is displayed if you have not registered your Westlaw password. Click register now and follow the online instructions.

Using the Tabbed Law School Page
When you sign on to Westlaw, the Law School page is displayed.

The Shortcuts section in the left frame contains features to help you find documents by citation. You can also find cases by party name and access law school resources.

The Resources section in the right frame has links to Westlaw databases that you can search. Click a link to display a Search page.
Retrieving a Document by Citation
To retrieve a specific document by citation, use the Shortcuts section.

- When you know the document’s citation, type it in the Find by citation text box and click Go.
- If you are unsure of the correct citation format for a federal case, statute, or regulation, click Find using a template to display easy-to-use, fill-in-the-blank Find templates.

Retrieving a Case by Party Name
To retrieve a case when you know one or more parties’ names, click Find a Case by Party Name in the Shortcuts section. The Find a Document page is displayed. Type one or both parties’ names in the text boxes, select the jurisdiction in which the case was heard or the reporter in which it was published, and click Go.

Accessing a Database
The easiest way to access a database is to use the Resources section of the Law School page. Simply click a database name to display the Search page for that database or a Search page with a list of databases.

To view a list of all the databases on Westlaw, click Directory at the top of any page. The Westlaw Directory is displayed. Browse the databases in the right frame by clicking the links or type a short description of a database, e.g., texas insurance cases, in the Search the Westlaw Directory text box at the top of the page and click Search. Click a database name in the directory search result to display the Search page for the database.

Searching for Documents
Westlaw provides two search methods, Natural Language and Terms and Connectors, so you can search the way that is most effective for you. When you access a database, the Search page is displayed. Select a search method by clicking the Terms and Connectors or Natural Language tab. Then type your search in the Search text box and click Search Westlaw.
Searching with Natural Language
The Natural Language search method allows you to use plain English to retrieve relevant documents. Type a description of your issue using terms that describe its main concepts, e.g., retaliatory discharge for age discrimination claim. (You will get better results if you use concepts you think a court would use to describe the issue.) Westlaw identifies legal phrases in your description, removes common terms, and generates variations of terms. Westlaw then retrieves the documents that most closely match the concepts in your description.

Use Natural Language when you are searching for broad concepts or when you are not retrieving the information you are looking for by using a Terms and Connectors search. Natural Language searching is available in most databases.

Searching with Terms and Connectors
The Terms and Connectors search method allows you to run a more precise search. Type key terms from your issue, using connectors to specify the relationship between those terms, e.g., “americans with disabilities act” a.d.a. /p protect! /s class group. For example, you can specify that your terms appear in the same sentence or the same paragraph. For help in creating a Terms and Connectors query, see the information below.

Using connectors
In Terms and Connectors searching, you must place connectors between your terms. Connectors specify the relationship that must exist between terms in your retrieved documents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Connector</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>To retrieve documents that contain</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AND</td>
<td>&amp;</td>
<td>both search terms</td>
<td>narcotics &amp; warrant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OR</td>
<td>a space</td>
<td>either search term or both terms</td>
<td>car automobile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammatical</td>
<td>/p</td>
<td>search terms in the same paragraph</td>
<td>hearsay /p utterance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connectors</td>
<td>/s</td>
<td>search terms in the same sentence</td>
<td>design /s defect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+s</td>
<td>the first term preceding the second in the same sentence</td>
<td>attorney +s fce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numerical</td>
<td>/n</td>
<td>search terms within n terms of each other (where n is a number from 1</td>
<td>personal /3 jurisdiction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connectors</td>
<td></td>
<td>to 255)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+n</td>
<td>the first term preceding the second by n terms (where n is a number</td>
<td>john +2 roberts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>from 1 to 255)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phrase</td>
<td>“ ”</td>
<td>search terms appearing in the same order as in the quotation marks</td>
<td>“attractive nuisance”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Using variations of word forms in your Terms and Connectors search
Use the root expander (!) to retrieve words with variant endings. Use the universal character (*) to retrieve words with variable characters.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To search for</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Westlaw retrieves documents that contain</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>compound words such as whistleblower</td>
<td>whistle-blower</td>
<td>whistle blower, whistle-blower, whistleblower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>abbreviations such as EPA</td>
<td>c.p.a.</td>
<td>E.P.A., E. P. A., EPA, E P A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>words with variant endings such as object</td>
<td>object!</td>
<td>object, objected, objection, objecting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>words with variable characters such as jury and withdraw</td>
<td>jur* *</td>
<td>jury, juror (but not jurisdiction)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>withdr* w</td>
<td>withdraw, withdrew</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Restricting Your Search by Field
Rather than searching entire documents, you can restrict your search to one or more fields. For
e.g., to restrict your search to the synopsis field (sy), the digest field (di), or both, e.g., sy,di(avoid! /p bankruptcy). The
field contains a summary of the case prepared by a West attorney-editor; the digest field contains the
the case.

Synopsis (sy)

Topic (to)

Endnote (he)

Viewing the Search Result
The citations of documents retrieved by your search are displayed in the result list, along with
your search terms and the surrounding text for each document in a Terms and Connectors search
result or the best portion of each document in a Natural Language search result.

To display the full text of a document, click its title or citation in the result list.

When you search a case law, statutes, regulations, or analytical database, Westlaw creates a
ResultsPlus® list containing related content on the right side of the result list. To view the full
text of a document in the ResultsPlus list, click its title.

To revise your search or to run it in a different database, click Edit Search.
Browsing Your Documents

Using navigation features

- Search terms are highlighted so you can quickly scan your documents. Click the Term arrows to view the next or previous occurrence of the search terms in your search result.
- In a Natural Language search result, click the Best arrows to view the portion of each document most closely matching the concepts in your description.
- Click the Doc arrows to display the next or previous document in your search result.
- Use the Tools drop-down list at the bottom of the page to go to a specific page of a print publication, restrict your document display to specific fields, or copy document text including its citation. The options vary depending on the type of document you are viewing.
- Click Full Screen List in the left frame to return to the result list in full-page view, or click the Full-Page View icon in the right frame to display the document across the entire page.

Locating specific terms

Click Locate in Result at the top of the result list or the left frame to search the documents in the result for particular terms, whether or not the terms appear in your original search. If you retrieve a large number of documents in your search result, you can use Locate to narrow your search.

Using the Links tab to access related information

The Links tab displays links to related information, e.g., KeyCite result and ResultsPlus sources, for a displayed document.

Viewing consecutive sections

Click Next Section or Previous Section, when available, at the top of a document to view consecutive documents even if they were not retrieved by your search or Find request. To return to the document you originally retrieved, click Original Results at the top of the Links tab or Result List tab.
**Copying and Pasting Text with the Citation**

The Copy with Reference feature allows you to copy and paste selected text with its citation from a document on Westlaw into a brief or other legal document. To copy and paste selected text with its citation, follow these steps:

1. Select the text you want to copy.
2. Select **Copy with Ref** from the **Tools** drop-down list at the bottom of the page and click **Go**.
3. When the Copy with Reference dialog box is displayed, containing the text you selected and the citation of the document containing the text, click **Copy**. Paste the copied text, which includes the citation, into your document.

**Checking Citations in KeyCite**

Use KeyCite to determine whether a case, statute, administrative decision, or regulation is good law and to retrieve citing references. Click **KeyCite** at the top of any page for a detailed explanation of the KeyCite status flags and depth of treatment stars. You can also download a free copy of *How to Check Citations* by accessing [west.thomson.com/westlaw/guides](http://west.thomson.com/westlaw/guides) and clicking Law School.

**KeyCite for cases**

**KeyCite status flags**

- A red flag warns that the case is no longer good law for at least one of the points of law it contains.
- A yellow flag warns that the case has some negative history but hasn't been reversed or overruled.
- A blue H indicates that the case has some history.
- A green C indicates that the case has citing references but no direct history or negative citing references.

**History of a case**

To view the full history of a displayed case, click **Full History** on the Links tab. The case history is displayed in the right frame. To view the direct history of the case in an easy-to-read graphical view, click **Direct History** (Graphical View).
KeyCite for statutes
Most statutory codes are codified and updated only once a year. However, legislative and judicial activity can amend, repeal, or invalidate a statute throughout the year. KeyCite provides you with current information.

KeyCite status flags
A red flag warns that a statute has been amended by a recent session law, repealed, superseded, or held unconstitutional or preempted in whole or in part.

A yellow flag warns that the statute has been renumbered or transferred by a recent session law; that an uncodified session law or proposed legislation affecting the statute is available (statutes merely referenced, i.e., mentioned, are not marked with a yellow flag); that the statute was limited on constitutional or preemption grounds or its validity was otherwise called into doubt; or that a prior version of the statute received negative judicial treatment.

A green C indicates that the statute has citing references.

History of a statute
To view the full history of a displayed statute, click History on the Links tab. Statute history includes citations to cases affecting the validity of the statute, recent session laws that amend or repeal the section, proposed legislation, bill drafts, reports and related materials, credits, and historical and statutory notes.

Delivering Documents
To print, e-mail, or download your documents on Westlaw, click a delivery icon in the upper-right corner of a retrieved document or result list. Click the Quick Print icon to print the document or result list you are viewing on an attached printer.

To use another delivery method, follow these steps:
1. Click the Print, Email, or Download icon.
2. A dialog box is displayed.
   - Specify whether you want to deliver specific documents or the result list. If you are delivering only the current document, specify whether you want to include KeyCite results. Under Page Options, specify which pages you want to deliver. If you are delivering a statute, you can select Statutory Text Only to deliver the statute without annotations.
   - Click Settings at the top of the dialog box to specify whether you want to include features such as KeyCite flags and highlighted search terms or to change the format of your document. Click Done when you are finished making your selections.
3. Click Print, Send, or Save depending on the delivery method you selected.

Returning to a Result or Research Session
Use the Research Trail feature to keep track of your research and return to previous work. Each research trail associated with your password is available for 14 days after it is saved.

- Click Research Trail at the top of any page to view the citations of documents you retrieved and the Westlaw databases and services you used during your current research session.
- Click a link under Research Event to return to a previous result.
- To view all research trails associated with your Westlaw password from the past 14 days, click List of All Research Trails.
- To e-mail the current research trail, click E-Mail Trail.