

PROFESSIONAL LEGAL RESEARCH

The case-finding tools on Westlaw give you a variety of methods for finding relevant cases. One of the most efficient is KeySearch®, which is powered by the West Key Number System®. This quick reference guide shows you how to use KeySearch to quickly find on-point cases.

What Is KeySearch?

KeySearch is a search tool that identifies key numbers and terms based on the topics you select from an easy-to-use list of topics. KeySearch then runs a query created by a West attorney-editor. It retrieves documents that contain key numbers, such as cases with West headnotes, as well as documents that don't contain key numbers, such as law review articles and cases without West headnotes.

How Do I Use KeySearch?

ACCESS KEYSEARCH

Click **Key Numbers** at the top of any page, then click **KeySearch** under *Browse Key Numbers* (Figure 1).

Search for Key Numbers
Enter terms e.g., *landlord duty of care to trespassers*

Jurisdiction selected: **All Federal Cases**
[Change Jurisdiction▼](#)

Browse Key Numbers
[West Key Number Digest Outline](#)
Browse through the 400+ topics of the West American Digest System.
[KeySearch](#)
KeySearch, powered by the West Key Number System, identifies relevant Key Numbers and their underlying concepts and runs a query for you. KeySearch can retrieve reported cases as well as documents that don't contain Key Numbers, such as law reviews and unpublished cases.

Figure 1. Link to KeySearch

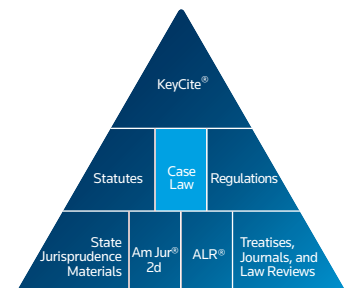
SELECT A TOPIC

At the KeySearch page (Figure 2), browse the list of topics and subtopics in the right frame by clicking the **Browse** icons (📁). When you see a topic or subtopic related to your issue, select it by clicking the **Search** icon (🔍) next to it, or click the **Search all of ...** link at the top of the page. You can also search the list of KeySearch topics and subtopics for specific terms by typing the terms in the text box in the left frame and clicking **Go**. (If you use more than one term, use a connector between the terms, e.g., *child /3 support*).

Category:

Research Fundamentals

For research assistance 24 hours a day, seven days a week, call the West Reference Attorneys at 1-800-850-WEST (1-800-850-9378) or click **Help** on Westlaw® for a live help session.



The Westlaw Research Pyramid

Using the Westlaw Research Pyramid

Much of your online research will focus on case law.

KeySearch uses the West Key Number System to build queries that easily retrieve relevant cases.



Figure 2. KeySearch page

SELECT A SOURCE

Once you've selected a topic or subtopic to search, the KeySearch search page is displayed (Figure 3). Choose the source you want to retrieve documents from, e.g., **Cases with West Headnotes: All Federal Cases**, and, if desired, type additional search terms in the *Add Search terms* text box. Then click **Search** to run the KeySearch query.

Figure 3. KeySearch search page

VIEW THE RESULT

The result list contains citations of documents retrieved by the KeySearch query. The search result may also include a ResultsPlus® list, which displays links to additional sources that are relevant to your search.

For assistance using Westlaw, call 1-800-850-WEST (1-800-850-9378).
For free reference materials, visit west.thomson.com/westlaw/guides.