The Goal of Legal Research: to find mandatory authority

Jurisdiction is key. WARNING: Reliance on The Bluebook citations may be detrimental reliance. Always verify your citations with The Bluebook.

Secondary Sources point to primary authority. When you pick up a book, write down the date. Remember RULE 18 (electronic resource).

### SECONDARY SOURCES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resource</th>
<th>Access</th>
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<th>Best Use</th>
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  • Narrow topics e.g. cats in apartments lease law  
  • Early on to learn about your topic (better than an encyclopedia)  
  • Has summaries of cases (not much analysis) |
| Encyclopedias (no clout) AmJur 2d C.J.S. | • Print – Index Volumes (quoting) | • Print: pocket parts, supplements | B 8.1; R 15.8(a)  
76 Am. Jur. 2d Trusts §§ 1-4 (1992 & Supp. 2007) | • To get an overview of a topic of law  
• Broad |
| Legal Periodicals (clout depends on author/publication) | • Legal Trac  
• WEXIS LRI database  
• Heinonline | None | B 9; R 16; Tables 10 & 13  
Consecutively or non-consecutively paginated matters | • Narrow  
• When the issue/topic is new |
| Restatements (clout) concise summary of common law rules | • Print – find in catalog (quoting)  
• Westlaw (quoting)  
• Lexis (quoting) | Appendices (case updates) | B 5.1.3; R 12.9.5  
Restatement (Second) of Contracts § 90 (1979). | • To bolster an argument  
• To find primary authority  
• Authoritative  
• Common law |
| Treatises (clout depends on author) | • Expository (like CJS, AmJur)  
• Interpretative (scholarly; analyzes the law deeply)  
• Critical (scholarly; analysis & commentary) | • Print – find in catalog; on the library website  
• Westlaw (quoting)  
• Lexis (quoting) | Could have pocket parts, supplements or new editions | B 8; R 15 – no publisher, no publication place; volume number precedes author  
• Authoritative treatment of a topic or area of law  
• To find primary authority  
• To do in depth research on a topic or area of law  
• Narrow  
• For analysis |
| U.L.A. (clout depends on whether your state has adopted a model act) | • Print – pamphlet index  
• Westlaw  
• Lexis | • Print: pocket parts, supplements  
Use KeyCite/Shepard's | R12.9.4; Yr. is last amended yr.  
• When your state has adopted a uniform law  
• To find case law in another state |

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### CASE ACCESS

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<tr>
<td>WEST DIGESTS</td>
<td>Print o D.W.I. o TABLE OF CASES o WORDS &amp; PHRASES • Westlaw o KEY SEARCH o KEY NUMBER BROWSE</td>
<td>Print: Closing table – go to reporters after &amp; search in mini-digest Use KeyCite or Shepard’s</td>
<td>NEVER CITE TO A DIGEST</td>
<td>• To find similar cases on narrow topics of law • Subject approach to case law</td>
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<td>REPORTERS</td>
<td>Print (by citation) • Westlaw o Citation or Search • Lexis o Citation or Search</td>
<td>Use KeyCite or Shepard’s to update or validate the case</td>
<td>FOR CASES: B 5; R 10, T 6 <em>E.g.</em> Meritor Sav. Bank v. Vinson, 477 U.S. 57, 60 (1986). NEVER CITE HEADNOTES Add court when citing F., F. Supp. &amp; Regional Reporters.</td>
<td>• To retrieve a published opinion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANNOTATED STATE STATUTES</td>
<td>Print o Citation o Index o Topic o Definition o Popular Name Index • Lexis o Citation o Index o TOC o Popular Name Index • Westlaw o Citation o Index o TOC o Popular Name Index</td>
<td>• Print o PP &amp; monthly legisl. pamphlets • Lexis o Date provided for current o Shepardize • Westlaw o Date provided for current o KeyCite</td>
<td>CODE: B6; R12 plus T1 <em>E.g.</em> Mich. Comp. Laws Ann. § 1032.5 (West 2001 &amp; Supp. 2006). Date = date on spine, title page, or copyright; &amp; Supp. – found info. In PP. Cite official code when possible – see T.1. R.18.3.2 when found on WEXIS (LEXIS through &lt;year&gt;, etc.) (West, Westlaw through &lt;year&gt;, etc.)</td>
<td>• To find cases • History of legislation • X-Refs to secondary sources</td>
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