

Introduction to Westlaw, Fall 2006

INTRODUCTION

- Instructors: Rae Best, Iva Futrell, Paul Haas, Roger Skalbeck
- Westlaw Customer Support: 1-800-850-WEST (9378)
- Reference: Located on first floor Room 141 (703-993-8076)
- Policy: Westlaw is restricted to educational use only. Use of Westlaw for law firms or other outside employment is prohibited.

BACKGROUND

- West started the National Reporter System about 130 years ago, publishing judge's decisions, and organizing and publishing them by regions.
- The Topic and Key Number is also a West publication and was created about 105 years ago. Otherwise known as the Digest System, the world of the law is divided into more than 400 topical areas of law. As the law changes, the Digest system is expanded.

SIGN ON TO WESTLAW

- Note your navigational links across the top and the short cut boxes on the side.
- Can customize by adding/removing tabs

LAW SCHOOL TAB

- Scroll down on the left frame– you will note links to (among others):
 - Definitions (Black's Law Dictionary) – Enter *assault*
 - Brief-It! [Brief-It is a class or research preparation tool, not a substitute for reading the case.]
 - Job Posting
 - My Account Manager & Training
 - TWEN
- You can Edit Shortcuts

FIND A CASE BY PARTY NAME

- Can retrieve cases, statutes, law review articles and other documents if you know the citations.
- Find a case by party name, e.g.:
 - Google in All U.S. Federal and State Cases
 - “George Mason University” in VA-CS [**NOTE significance of quotation marks for phrases.**]


CASE LAW

- **FIND: 560 A. 2d 1120** (Craig v. State)
- **Synopsis:** Includes a brief description of the facts, the procedural history and the holding of the case.
- **Digest:** The topic and key number sub-classification identifies the issue of law; and the paragraph following identifies the rule of law. These are the points of law in the case.
- Most cases are available in pdf back to 1920 or so.

KEYCITE (checking to see if your case is still good law and that it does not have negative history)

- The KeyCite link shows you what the status flags mean.
- Remember: just because a case has been overruled in part does not mean you cannot use that case; you just can't use it for the rule of law that was reversed or overruled.
- Graphical Keycite

DATABASE SEARCH

- Start in **DIRECTORY** => U.S. State Materials => Other U.S. States => New Jersey => Cases => State Courts (NJ-CS)
- Note “Database Identifier” and “Scope Information” icon 
- A more direct way of getting to the same place is via the “Search the Westlaw Directory” box from the Directory page
- Click on “**Natural Language**”
 - Type: Is there a duty to disclose toxic waste near a purchased home?
 - Sorts via statistical relevancy
 - Automatically defaults to 100 most relevant cases
 - Select first case
 - “Links For” includes Results Plus (links to secondary and primary sources to give you a solid background on the issues of law you are investigating); can also use “Results List” tab for all 100 cases
 - Use Term at bottom to find your term(s) in the cases
 - Use Best at bottom to find the “best” part of each case
 - NOTE that it searches across all cases (documents)
 - NOTE link in “best” portion of Nobrega case to NJSA
 - Go back to Directory we will do another NJ-CS search
- Click on “**Terms and Connectors**”
 - Type: disclos! /50 toxic /p waste
 - Use the Thesaurus to add “hazardous” to “toxic”
 - Generates *only* those cases that fit your search statement (19)
 - Sorts cases in descending chronological order
 - NOTE “Results Plus” on right side of page.
 - USE “Locate in Result” (similar to Lexis’s “Focus”) to find specific terms within the cases that may help narrow your search; e.g. *agent broker* (remember to use singular) then use Thesaurus to add *dealer* and *realtor*.

COPY WITH REFERENCE

- Highlight part of the case you want to copy (Use Nobrega)
- Go to “tools” and click on “**Copy with reference**”
- NOTE “star paging”
- Paste it into a Word, WordPerfect document
- Provides the name of the case, all parallel citations, pin cite, court and date
- CAUTION – Not in Bluebook format

PRINTING

- Print buttons on the top of the screen: Always choose “print” (not “quick print”) here on campus. Click the drop-down menu to select printer in Lab 342 or 350 for free printing
- You can e-mail from direct link or via drop-down menu.

KEYSEARCH

- Use KeySearch, top right, when you are unsure of your search terms. Similar to Lexis’s Search Advisor.
- KeySearch is a tool powered by the **West Key Number System** that identifies key numbers and terms related to your legal issue and runs a search.
- **Select** Torts/ Personal Injury, Fraud, Duty to Disclose **or**
 Type “*duty to disclose*” in box at left; **select** Torts/Personal Injury/Fraud/Duty to Disclose, **select** jurisdiction as with Key Number search
- KeySearch automatically creates a research query, see [View/Edit Full Query](#)

RESEARCH TRAIL – Saves everything we’ve done since signing on; saves for 14 days with renewal available.

HELP (Available 24/7) – 1/800-850-WEST (9378)

Log on to TWEN to take quiz; go to Welcome screen (bottom on left side of page)

SIGN-OFF - Click the sign-off button – do NOT just close the browser.



Law Library

LEXIS → WESTLAW
 WESTLAW → LEXIS
 TRANSLATOR

Task	Lexis	Westlaw
retrieve a document	Get a Document	Find
search phrases	type the phrase, no need for "" marks	must use "quotation marks"
plurals	automatically retrieves the singular, plural, and possessive form for regular plural endings	plural word will not retrieve the singular form will retrieve irregular plurals
hyphens	hyphen is read as a space e-mail will not retrieve email	looks for both: e-mail will retrieve both e-mail and email
search connector – or	must type "or" between words	reads a space as the word "or"
search connectors – grammatical and numerical	cannot combine different types of connectors – stick with one or the other	OK to combine /s or /p with a /# connector
limit search to specific portions of the document	segments	fields
narrow your search results	Focus	Locate
update/expand your research	Shepard's Citations	KeyCite
get new search results automatically	Alerts	WestClip
research help	1.800.45.LEXIS (5-3947)	1-800-850-WEST (9378)
your research history	History	Research Trail
news	<i>Wall Street Journal</i>	<i>Legal Times</i> <i>American Lawyer</i>
best for*	law reviews business information – companies and industries	case research (key #s) legislative history (statutes plus)

*This is purely my opinion, based on my own experience, and subject to change due to improvements in the Lexis and Westlaw databases.