



LEGAL RESEARCH HELP

Researching a specific legal topic? Or just brushing up on general research skills? There are many helpful resources for a legal researcher—in person, in print, and online.

I. In-Person

Charlotte Law Reference Desk

The reference desk is always happy to guide a researcher to helpful books and databases. For research help, email libreference@charlottelaw.org or call (704) 971-8573.

Westlaw and Lexis-Nexis Help

Both Westlaw and Lexis provide 24-hour reference assistance in the form of instant messaging style communication and traditional telephone service. Westlaw's help is available via the Help Center located in the upper right hand corner of the Westlaw interface. Lexis-Nexis offers a similar service, Live Support, also located in the upper right corner.

Westlaw Telephone Help: 1-800-733-2889

Lexis Telephone Help: 1-800-455-3947

II. Books

[Finding the Law](#) / Robert C. Berring and Elizabeth Edinger (2005)

Location: Reference, KF 240 .B45 2005

Now in the 12th edition, *Finding the Law* provides an in depth look at researching the law. It is generously illustrated with pictures from Lexis-Nexis, Westlaw and print resources. Each section of the book also contains a bibliography of additional reading materials.

[Legal Research in a Nutshell](#) / Morris Cohen and Kent Olson (2003)

Location: Reserve, KF 240 .C54 2003

Nutshells are an easily accessible resource that offers a concise overview of a subject. Cohen and Olson's nutshell on legal research covers all of the basics of legal research and also offers numerous links to both books and websites.

[Where the Law Is](#) / J.D.S. Armstrong and Christopher Kent (2006)

Location: Reserve and Reference, KF 240 .A76 2006

At only 250 pages Armstrong's book provides a concise ready reference source for a variety of common legal research questions. There are also extensive citations to online and print resources available.



[Legal Research in North Carolina](#) / Miriam J. Baer (2006)

Location: Reserve, KFN 7475 .B34 2006

Unique elements of North Carolina legal research such as state legislative histories are explained in this volume.

III. Online

LLRX.com

LLRX is the definitive online resource for both up to date and obscure research guides. For example, did you know there is a research guide on the domestic cat? See <http://www.llrx.com/features/catlaw.htm>. In addition to these specialized topics, LLRX also offers broad practical research advice on topics such as legislative history in North Carolina. (<http://www.llrx.com/features/nclegis.htm>).

Zimmerman's Research Guide

<http://www.lexisnexis.com/infopro/zimmerman/>

This free resource from LexisNexis covers a wide range of legal research topics from “Abbreviations and Acronyms” to “Zoning”. In total, there are hundreds of guides that offer excellent starting points for research.

The Virtual Chase

<http://www.virtualchase.com/>

The Virtual Chase maintains an extensive electronic library of how-to articles covering topics such as evaluating Internet sources, web search techniques, company research, and legal research.

Google's Advance Search

http://www.google.com/advanced_search

Google can be a problematic tool. Often, irrelevant or commercial results can plague a search. However, the power of the advanced search options can be used to find relevant and reliable legal research guides. Using the “Advanced Search” option one can limit the search to the “.edu” domain and combine search terms such as “subject” + “pathfinder” or “subject” + “research guide”.