



USING SECONDARY SOURCES

I. [American Law Reports](#) (ALR)

Location: Reference, KF 132 .A52

Westlaw: ALR

Lexis: LEDALR

ALRs provide detailed analysis, with many citations, of specific problems in the law.

Many of the topics are controversial and topical. For example, the topic “Products

Liability: Cardiac Pacemakers” contains:

1. A one paragraph overview of the topic.
2. A table of contents
3. Research References: Including suggested Westlaw searches and Key Numbers.
4. An index
5. Tables of cases, statutes and regulations divided by jurisdiction
6. The article itself (60+ pages)

ALRs are published in chronological series: ALR 1-6 and ALR Federal 1-2. Volumes are updated by pocket part supplements. Volumes are searchable via a Digest, a Quick Index and a General Index.

II. Legal Encyclopedias

Legal encyclopedias are huge series that attempt to cover all American legal issues. They are good starting points that lead a researcher to more in-depth analysis found in cases, treatises, and practice books. Many states, including North Carolina and South Carolina, also have state-specific legal encyclopedias.

1. [Corpus Juris Secundum](#) (CJS)

Location: Reference, KF 154 .C56; Westlaw: CJS

CJS contains detailed articles on a large range of legal topics and includes extensive citations. It provides citations to West’s Key Number system as a way to find additional cases on a topic. CJS is updated via pocket parts and is indexed with a multi-volume index shelved at the end of the set.

2. [American Jurisprudence 2d](#) (AmJur)

Location: Reference, KF 154 .A42; Westlaw: AMJUR; Lexis: AMJUR

AmJur 2nd also contains detailed articles on many legal topics, but the citations are more selective than CJS. New topics are added in the appropriately titled New Topics volume at the end of the series. AmJur 2nd also has a multi-volume general index shelved at the end of the set.

3. [Strong’s North Carolina Index](#)

Location: Reference, KFN 7445.6 .S82 1989; Westlaw: NCINDEX



Strong's Index is similar to CJS and AmJur but is limited to North Carolina law. It is updated by supplements and pocket parts, and the index is located at the end of the series.

Strong's North Carolina Archive Index

Location: KFN 7445.6 .S824 1996;

This set is useful for historical research. Older cases from the 18th, 19th and early 20th century not included in the current series are found here.

Strong's on Westlaw

Westlaw has helpfully divided Strong's into smaller categories that are easier to search:

Animal Law (NCINDEX-AML)

Business (NCINDEX-BUS)

Construction Law (NCINDEX-CSTR)

Environmental Law (NCINDEX-ENV)

Estate Planning and Probate (NCINDEX-EPP)

Family (NCINDEX-FAM)

Insurance Defense (NCINDEX-IDF)

Municipal (NCINDEX-MUN)

Real Property (NCINDEX-RP)

4. South Carolina Jurisprudence

Location: Reference, KFS 1865 .S68 1991

South Carolina Jurisprudence contains brief articles with heavy citations to additional West secondary material, cases and statutes. Like all legal encyclopedias, it is updated by pocket parts and supplements. An index is located at the end of series.

South Carolina Jurisprudence on Westlaw

Westlaw has divided South Carolina Jurisprudence into smaller categories that are easy to search. These databases are found in the same pattern as North Carolina: SCJUR-AML, SCJUR-BUS, etc.

5. Other State Legal Encyclopedias

Location: Westlaw and Lexis only

Many, but not all, states have legal encyclopedias. Lexis lists these encyclopedias under Secondary Legal → Jurisprudence and ALR. Westlaw lists additional state encyclopedias under individual states.

III. Practice-Specific Series

Digests and annotated statutes are great resources for finding the law. But why re-invent the wheel if a previous attorney has already gathered information on your issue? The practice specific series below provide time saving practical articles.

1. Causes of Action 2d (COA)



Location: Compact Shelving. KF 8863 .S53 1983; Westlaw: COA
Causes of Action, currently in its second edition, is dedicated to providing lengthy articles on specific real-world legal issues and written by experienced practicing attorneys. Advice is given from both the plaintiff and defendant point of view. Each article also provides checklists, practice tips, and citations to cases, statutes, forms, and secondary sources. Additionally articles provide sample documents for attorneys or students to consult. Volumes are updated via a pocket part; but be careful when relying on older articles as they may be superseded. The general index covers first and second series, and it is shelved after the second series.

2. [American Jurisprudence Trials](#) (AmJur Trials)

Location: Compact Shelving, KF 8915 .A74; Westlaw: AMJUR-TRIALS
AmJur Trials is a 100+ volume series designed to provide an attorney with all the resources needed to try a specific type of case. These resources include: an explanation of the law, tips for the client interview, sample complaints, trial tips, and references to other sources. Volumes are indexed by a general index and the most recent volumes are indexed by an update pamphlet. Volumes are updated via pocket parts.

3. [Proof of Facts 3d](#) (POF)

Location: Compact Shelving, KF 8933 .A42 1988; Westlaw: AMJUR-POF
Proof of Fact's self-proclaimed mission is to "explain and illustrate how to prove particular facts that are essential to a cause of action or a defense". To accomplish this goal Proof of Fact's articles contain references to cases, statutes, and secondary sources. POF also provides practice orientated material such as:

1. Convenient checklists of information to obtain during a client interview
2. Sample interrogatories
3. Model Complaints
4. Sample testimony

IV. Definitions

[Words and Phrases](#)

Location: Reference, KF 156 .W6712; Westlaw: WP (field)

Words and Phrases is a large multi-volume set that covers judicial definitions. Both federal and state court definitions are included in the alphabetically arranged set. Westlaw does not have a separate Words and Phrases databases, but "WP" can be used as field to search.

[Black's Law Dictionary 8d](#)

Location: Reference, KF 156 .B53 2004; Westlaw: BLACKS

Although there are other legal dictionaries (Ballentine, Beyer), Black's is the most widely used legal dictionary. Terms are succinctly explained and cross referenced to cases and other secondary sources.

V. Treatises and Looseleafs



A treatise focuses on a single area of law. Treatises range from broad, multi-volume sets, such as *Corbin on Contracts* (Reference, KF 801 C65 1993), to narrowly-focused one-volume titles, such as *Construction Industry: Coverages and Disputes* (Compact Shelving, KF 1190 S53 1994).

Practitioners rely heavily on treatises for the succinct summaries and practical tips they contain. A list of major legal treatises, organized by subject area, is available [here](#).

1. Using the Law Library Catalog to Find Treatises

Location: Charlottelaw.org → Law Library → Library Catalog

Using the Keyword search, you can search the entire record of the item. This option is useful when you don't know the exact title of a book. Once you find a good treatise, you can click on one of the subject links to see additional titles that have that same subject.

2. Looseleafs

Location: Reference and Compact Shelving

Looseleafs are legal treatises on time sensitive subjects. Since the law changes frequently, it is necessary to remove pages from the binders and insert new pages. Charlotte Law Library subscribes to numerous looseleafs on a variety of topics. Some prominent titles are:

[Powell on Real Property](#), KF 570 .P67

[Couch on Insurance](#), KF 1159.5 .C662

[Collier on Bankruptcy](#), KF 1524 .C633

[Nimmer on Copyright](#), KF 2991.5 N5

[Chisum on Patents](#), KF 3114 .C47

[Larson's Worker's Compensation Law](#), KF 3613.4 .L33

[Standard Federal Tax Reporter](#), KF 6285 C67

[Weinstein's Federal Evidence](#), KF 8935 .W393