


Tips for cost-effective research





Become familiar with legal research options at your location

- Different firms and agencies subscribe to different information vendors.
- Knowing what each vendor offers and the pricing models employed enables you to find information cost-effectively.
- Ask a librarian to help you.



Know how much things cost

- Transactional or per-search pricing charges you for every search you run.
- Hourly pricing charges you for the amount of time spent on a research service.



Transactional pricing

- Transactional is best when you plan to spend time going through documents.
- Transactional is good for locating different types of databases in your interest area (before you search them)



Hourly pricing

- Hourly is best when you need to find something quickly.
- Hourly is good when you want to run many searches in a row.




7-minute rule

- A good rule of thumb is that it takes about 7 minutes of hourly searching to equal a single transactional search.
- Because of differences in vendor contracts, database costs, and other factors this is not always the case.

Check database pricing

- Lexis & Westlaw will often tell you the price of the database. Click the “i” information button after the database name.

Estate Legislation, Bills, Reports, & Public Laws 

All State Cases (ALLSTATES) 

- Differences in vendor contracts may make the cost inexact, but it will give you an idea of how expensive it is.



Start broad and narrow later

- Lexis and Westlaw allow you to narrow search results without incurring additional charges when charged per Transaction.
- Start with a broad search to get many documents and narrow down as needed.

Lexis “Focus”

1. Start with a broad search.

LexisNexis® Total Research System

Search Research Tasks Get a Document Shepard's® Alerts Total Litigator Transactional Advisor Counsel Selector

FOCUS™ Terms Search Within [Advanced...](#)

2. Add additional terms to narrow your search.

Search Research Tasks Get a Document Shepard's® Alerts Total Litigator Transactional Advisor Counsel Selector

FOCUS™ Terms Search Within [Advanced...](#)

View: [Cite](#) | [KWIC](#) | [Full](#) | [Custom](#)

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3. Move between result sets without incurring additional transactional charges.

FOCUS™ Terms Search Within [Advanced...](#)

View: [Cite](#) | [KWIC](#) | [Full](#) | [Custom](#)

Original Results (1 - 984)
Original Results (1 - 984)
Current Results(1 - 6)
Selected Documents

◀ 1 - 6 of 6 ▶

Westlaw “Locate in Result”

1. Start with a broad search.


[Edit Search:](#) Database: [Locate in Result](#)

Results: 228 Documents [Add Search to WestClip](#)

2. Add additional terms to narrow your search.

Locate Search Terms

Selected Databases

United States Code Annotated 

Terms and Connectors

Locate:

[Thesaurus](#)

3. Edit or cancel your Locate search as needed.

[Edit Locate:](#) [Cancel Locate](#)

Locate Results: 23 of 228 Documents [Add Search to WestClip](#)



Browse the table of contents with transactional pricing

- Locating a document in the table of contents is cheaper than searching for it (although more expensive than getting by citation).
- Often searching the table of contents is also cheaper than searching the database content itself.