

Advanced Tips for Enhanced Legal Research on Fastcase (2013) (60 minutes total).

1. Fastcase Basics (5 min)
 - a. Login Process: (2 min)
 - i. Retail: If you are a retail subscriber to Fastcase (you purchase your service directly through us) you can login at www.fastcase.com using your email address and password.
 - ii. Bar Association Subscribers: Login directly from your bar's website using your bar login and password.
 - b. Scope of Coverage: (3 min)
 - i. Fastcase is a primary law database
 - ii. Comprehensive list of the content available at www.fastcase.com/coverage
 1. Case Law
 2. Integrated Statutes
 3. Some administrative regulations, courts rules, and constitutions.
2. Searching for Cases: (4 min)
 - a. Navigation: Each type of primary law is searchable in its own database. Choose the appropriate document type from the Search menu.
 - b. Two search interfaces: Quick Caselaw Search vs. Advanced Caselaw Search
 - c. Search Types:
 - i. Citation Lookup: This means pulling up a case using the reporter citation.
 - ii. Natural Language: Good for beginners or users who are not legal professionals.
 - iii. Keyword (Boolean): This should be your go-to search the majority of the time. It is the most powerful and precise way to search.
3. 10 tips for enhanced legal research (45 min)
 - a. Develop a research strategy: (8 min)
 - i. What issue am I searching for?
 - ii. What legal principles are involved?
 - iii. Are there additional search terms that might be helpful?
 1. An effective case law search often begins with secondary sources to help identify the legal principles at issues. Treatises, journal articles, Google searches and even natural language searches can be a good place to start.
 - iv. Today's problem
 1. Issue: Whether a police officer can draw blood without a warrant for suspected driving while intoxicated
 2. Legal principles
 3. Additional search terms
 - b. Broaden the depth (but not the width) of your search (5 min)
 - i. Use synonyms
 - ii. Use the wildcard operator
 - iii. Use proximity searches, not exact phrases

1. Example: “the fourth amendment requires a warrant to draw blood”
 - a. No results
 2. blood w/10 warrant & "fourth amendment" = 964 results
 3. Results sorted by relevancy
 - a. Show first case
- c. Find more cases with the Authority Check Report (5 min)
- i. Sort by “these results”
 - ii. View most cited case
 - iii. Click on Authority Check report (entire database)
 - iv. See list of citing cases
 1. These cases may contain new terms that you hadn’t thought of in the earlier searches
 - v. Filter by jurisdiction
- d. Keyword search tips (3 min)
- i. Consult User Guide for unsupported proximity searches
 1. Example: privilege w/5 (document or email) = no results
 2. (privilege w/5 document) or (privilege w/5 email) = 1,000 results
 - ii. Use quotation marks around numerical search terms
 - iii. Use parentheses to specify the order of operations
 1. Example: slander and “public concern” or libel not “public official”
 2. ((slander and “public concern”) or libel) not “public official”
 3. slander and ((“public concern” or libel) not “public official”)
 - a. Note the differences between which cases were ranked higher in relevance
- e. Searching Across Multiple Jurisdictions: (3 min)
- i. Fastcase allows you to customize your search by choosing exactly which jurisdictions to search.
 - ii. You can even select multiple jurisdictions and group them together.
 1. Example: Search across all courts that have jurisdiction in the District of Columbia.
 2. Select Individual Jurisdictions and then select each court from the relevant category.
 - a. U.S. Supreme Court and U.S. Courts of Appeal:
 - b. U.S. Supreme Court and U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit
 - c. U.S. District Courts: U.S. District Court for the Dist. of Columbia
 - d. U.S. Bankruptcy Courts: U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the Dist. of Columbia
 - e. State Supreme and Appeals Courts: Dist. of Columbia Court of Appeals
- f. Bookmarking Search Results: (3 min)
- i. Fastcase automatically saves your last 10 searches so that you can easily re-run those searches and view your search results if your research project is interrupted. You can also save any number of searches for later reference using your browser’s bookmark or favorites function.

1. Run your desired search
 2. On the results page, press Ctrl + D
 - a. This will trigger your browser's bookmark or favorites function so you can bookmark the page or add the page to your favorites
 3. To access a saved search, login to Fastcase and then load the saved bookmark or favorite in your browser. Your search will be re-run and you will be taken directly to the search results
 4. Many browsers allow you to manage and organize your bookmarks or favorites by putting them in folders. Take a moment to name your searches and organize them in folders that make them easy to find in the future
- g. Retrieve and Batch Print Multiple Cases: (3 min)
- i. Opposing counsel's brief just landed on your desk and you want to pull the cases he cited
 1. You can retrieve and print up to 20 cases at a time in the quick caselaw or advanced caselaw search screen
 - a. Enter case citations in search box, separated by commas
 - b. From result screen, click the printer icon next to each case to add it to your print queue
 - c. Click "View Print Queue" from Print menu to review the list of cases, choose a file format, and press Print/Save to download all of the cases in your print queue as a single document.
 - d. Open the downloaded file on your computer using the appropriate software program and print it out.
- h. Use Forecite as a Backstop: (5 min)
- i. Fastcase helps you identify important cases that can be missed by ordinary keyword searches.
 1. Example from earlier search: blood w/10 warrant AND "fourth amendment"
 2. Results list
 3. Clicking on "Forecite" banner shows 3 cases that were missed by the search terms but were often cited by the cases you did return
- i. Browse Statutes in Outline View: (3 min)
- i. Great way to view statutes because you can jump easily from section to section and see where individual sections fall in the overall framework.
 - ii. Also a good way to find specific statute sections without worrying about how the citation should be formatted
 - iii. From Search Statutes screen, tab next to "Search"
 1. Example of Florida statute in outline view
 2. Click Browse View tab at the top of the screen
 3. Click the plus sign to expand any level and scroll up and down to find the Part, Title, Section or Chapter that you are looking for.
 4. Select a section by clicking on it
 5. Browse view on the left; statute section on the right

- j. "Annotate" a statute with a creative case law search (3 min)
 - i. Use the statute number or citation as the keyword in a caselaw search
 - 1. Example: 42 U.S.C. § 1983
 - 2. Multiple ways court might cite the section
 - 3. Suggested search
 - k. Bonus tip (4 min)
 - i. Mobile Sync
 - ii. Syncs desktop and mobile search history and saved cases
- 4. Customer support options (1 min)
 - 5. Question and Answer Session (5 min)