

WIENER-ROGERS LAW LIBRARY
NEVADA CASES**Introduction**

Nevada case research is limited by the fact that there is very little case law available to research. Nevada's court system consists of the following courts:

1. Nevada Supreme Court (*highest court*)
2. Nevada Court of Appeals
3. District Courts
4. Justice Courts
5. Municipal Courts

Of these courts, only the Nevada Supreme Court and the Nevada Court of Appeals publish opinions. Information about cases in the Justice Courts or the District Courts may be obtained (for a small fee) from the court itself, however this information is not available in the law library.

Decisions from the Nevada Supreme Court and the Nevada Court of Appeals are published in the *Nevada Reports* and in the *Pacific Reporter*. The decisions are also available electronically in the library through Westlaw Public Access and LexisNexis Academic. Cases from other states, including California, Arizona, and Utah, are also published in the *Pacific Reporter*.

I. Different Ways to Search for Cases**A. Searching for Cases about a Particular Subject***Online research*

Westlaw Public Access and LexisNexis Academic are databases available at the law library. Both databases allow for keyword or subject matter searches. Links to these databases are available on the Law Library's website, but they can only be accessed by patrons while physically inside the Law Library.

Print research

For those who prefer to use printed materials, a digest can be used to access cases by subject matter. A digest is an index of cases arranged alphabetically by topic/subject. The *Pacific Digest* is used to locate Nevada cases. There are also digests for other states and regions in the United States, as well as a digest that covers all 50 states – the decennial digest.

In a digest, every subject is assigned a topic and a key number. To find a topic or key number, begin with the Digest's Descriptive Word Index (several volumes located near the end of the digest series). Think of several terms that describe the desired topic.

Example: interested in finding case involving libel, slander, or defamation

The Digest contains the section heading, "Libel and Slander." Beneath this main heading are the subheadings for more narrow concepts, such as "Libel and Slander—Burden of Proof."

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The entry in the Descriptive Word Index will tell you which topic and key number to look under. “Libel and Slander—Burden of Proof—Generally” is found under “Libel, key number 101 (1-5).” When a case is published, the editors of the digest will determine which topics and Key Numbers the case best represents. Key Numbers are a helpful tool to group a variety of cases dealing with similar legal concepts.

Under the topic and key number, there are brief summaries of cases that have been decided on that topic. The case citation is listed after the case summary.

B. Searching for a Particular Citation

Nevada cases are cited as follows: *Name of Case*, Volume #_Reporter_Page #_(year).

i. Print Search

Example 1: *Buffalo v. State*, **111 Nev. 1139** (1995).

The case is located in volume 111 of the *Nevada Reports* on page 1139.

Example 2: *Oliver v. Barrick Goldstrike Mines*, **905 P.2d 168** (1995).

The case is located in volume 905 of the *Pacific Reporter* second edition, on page 168.

ii. Electronic Search

Example: *Buffalo v. State*, **111 Nev. 1139** (1995).

Typing **111 Nev. 1139** into the “find by citation” box on either Westlaw Public Access or LexisNexis Academic will also retrieve the desired case.

C. Searching by Case Name in Westlaw Public Access or LexisNexis Academic

Example: *Buffalo v. State*, 111 Nev. 1139 (1995).

Cases can be located by searching by one or more of the parties to a case, such as “Buffalo.” Searches can also be narrowed by using a jurisdiction-specific database, such as “Nevada Cases” in Westlaw Public Access or LexisNexis Academic.

II. Using Citators

A citator is a tool that checks whether a case is still good law (in other words, whether a case has been overturned). Citators are sometimes referred to as Shepard’s (LexisNexis) or Keycite (Westlaw). Both Shepard’s and Keycite provide:

1. Recent materials that refer to a particular case;
2. Parallel citations for a particular case; and
3. Judicial history of a case or statute.

**As of 2012, the library has cancelled all print subscriptions to Shepard’s citators, with the exception of Nevada Shepard’s Citations, which are located at Call No. KFN659.S5 in the Reserve Room. Therefore, the best option for most patrons is to use Keycite in the Westlaw Public Access database.*