§ 2.9

Corpus Juris Secundum

Legal Encyclopedia – Interactive Study

Corpus Juris Secundum is a national legal encyclopedia published by *West Publishing Company* (a part of *Thomson Reuters* at this printing). Legal encyclopedias provide at least a little information about almost every area of law. Encyclopedias have two basic goals:

- To educate the researcher about a topic.
- To lead the researcher to primary authority.

C.J.S. (as *Corpus Juris Secundum* is commonly abbreviated) educates the researcher by commenting upon an area of law. Within the commentary are footnote reference numbers (example: ¹³). These references lead the researcher to the cases and statutes provided in the footnotes at the bottom of the page, thus guiding him or her to primary authority. *C.J.S.* discusses the law and may be quoted, but it is not the law. Therefore, *C.J.S.* is **secondary authority**. As you conduct this Assignment using the online resources, you will notice that the methods for accessing *C.J.S.* mirror those for accessing *Am. Jur. 2d.* That is, of course, by design. As you become familiar with the online legal research environment, researching in any database will simply be a matter of slight adjustment.

QUICKVIEW – CORPUS JURIS SECUNDUM

Westlaw

- 1. Locate the main Search Bar at the top of the home page
- 2. Type CJS, click Secondary Sources, select link for Corpus Juris Secundum
- 3. Enter your search query in the main Search Bar at the top
- 4. Select an article from the list of search results
- 5. Review the articles and have any relevant documents delivered by printing or email

Lexis

C.J.S. is not available on Lexis

Law Library

- 1. Locate the set of *indexes* at the end of the set, then research key terms
- 2. The index leads to the main volume using topics and section numbers
- 3. Look for footnote references that will lead to additional authority
- 4. Always check the pocket part (supplement)
- 5. When applicable, utilize the Volume Index







ASSIGNMENT § 2.9(a) | CORPUS JURIS SECUNDUM USING WESTLAW

At the time of the printing of this publication, only *Westlaw* provides online access to *Corpus Juris Secundum*.

- 1. Select the Filter (Database)
 - a. In the main search bar at the top, type: CJS
 - b. When the box makes recommendations underneath the search box, select *Corpus Juris Secundum*.

(Be sure to click that suggestion in the drop-down. If you simply type "CJS" and click the search button, Westlaw will search in Federal databases for the term "CJS" instead of opening the database resulting in a long list of cases where "CJS" has been cited.)

After selecting *Corpus Juris Secundum* from the drop-down list, you will be taken to the *C.J.S.* index page. (Notice that your search filter has been updated to *Corpus Juris Secundum*.)

- 2. Search within the desired filter
 - a. Using the top search bar, type in a search query relevant to your client's case
 - b. *Westlaw* will now search for those terms using the *Corpus Juris Secundum* filter (database)
- 3. Review the Results Page

The page that appears is the *Results* page. Keep in mind that at this point the researcher is first and foremost trying to determine whether the search was productive, resulting in relevant articles or other authority. If the results do not appear relevant to your research topic, tweak your search query in the main Search Bar at the top of the page.

The Results Page has two main elements:

- **The Main Window** (on the right side of the page) This is where the "hits" appear from your search
- **The Filters Window** (on the far left) You can further focus your search results by selecting specific narrowing filters (although this will likely not apply when researching secondary authority since you have already narrowed your filters)

Each "hit" in the main window consists of the title (which is also a link to that "hit"), followed by a short preview of the "hit," with terms from your search query highlighted.

CHAPTER 2



By quickly browsing the preview of the document, along with the highlighted terms, the researcher may quickly determine whether or not that "hit" is worth reviewing in further detail.

Notice that in the **Filters** window at left you have other options. First, you are able to *Search within results*, which means you can conduct another search for more specific terms, this time limiting the search to the documents you have already found. You can also further filter the results by checking one or more boxes next to the filters listed. Give it a try a couple of times to see how it works.

- 4. Select relevant articles from the Results page The researcher can either
 - Open each "hit" and review the article more thoroughly online,
 - or
 - By using the portion of the article provided, simply click the check box to the left of each title and have those articles delivered via email, download, or other means. The second option is strongly recommended. As a student you are not paying for the time you spend in the site, but in a law firm every minute costs money, eating up the firm's allotted minutes allowed for in its *Westlaw* subscription. To read each article online is expensive and wasteful.



It is recommended that you quickly scan the articles, checking off the ones that appear most promising.



5. Review the Articles

The article page can be confusing at first glance. However, there are three primary navigation aids that, once recognized, make the page less intimidating. The main goals in using *C.J.S.* are to educate the researcher regarding a specific area of law and to locate primary authority. These navigation tools assist in those efforts. They are:

- The Article Window
- Links to Footnotes
- Links to Additional Authority



• The Article Window

The Article Window, at the left of the page, provides the articles that contain the most likely relevant "hits" from the search query. As mentioned previously, the title is also a link to the full article, and it is followed by a brief excerpt from the article, with search terms highlighted, so the researcher may quickly ascertain whether that article is worth reviewing in full. If so, click the check box. Later you will have all checked articles delivered via email or download.

• Links to Footnotes

Within the article you will see references to footnotes. If you hover over the footnote link, the footnote will appear over the text. Or, if you click on a footnote reference number, you will be taken to the actual footnote at the bottom of that page.

• Links to Additional Authority

Once you have been led to a footnote, you will likely find citations (that are also active links) to additional authority, such as cases, statutes, regulations, or even other secondary sources such as treatises or form books.



CHAPTER 2

No More Supplements

It should be noted that in *Westlaw* the supplement that previously appeared at the bottom of the page in *Westlaw* has been removed. *Westlaw* has chosen to make things cleaner by simply replacing, augmenting, or modifying the original text in the article instead of supplementing it. This, indeed, makes your job easier because you can be assured that the document you are reviewing is the most up to date version of that article.

Delivery of Relevant Documents: The Delivery Icon

For this exercise you are simply getting used to the layout of the website. When you conduct actual research, you should either copy the citations of articles and primary authority (referred to within those articles), or you should check them for "delivery."



The Delivery Icon is a down arrow **down** on the top right tool bar. When you click it a dropdown menu will appear with several options for delivery of your documents. (In a real job it costs money no matter what form of delivery is used. Practice being frugal about deliveries.)

CHECKLIST - CORPUS JURIS SECUNDUM USING WESTLAW

Locate the Search Bar at the top of the page

Type CJS and then select Corpus Juris Secundum from the recommendations that pop up

In the Search Bar at the top of the Corpus Juris Secundum database page, type your query

In the Results Page, modify the query, or search within the results, as needed

Within the *Article Page*, try using the footnote references, and the footnotes themselves, to find primary authority

Read an article that appears relevant

Be sure to copy citations to, or deliver, relevant primary authority



REVIEW QUESTIONS 2.9(A) – CORPUS JURIS SECUNDUM USING WESTLAW

1. Detail how you located the Corpus Juris Secundum filter.

2. What search query did you use?

3. When you saw the *Results Page*, were you satisfied with the outcome of your search query, or did you need to modify it?

4. Were you led to any relevant primary authority either in the *Article* or in the *Footnotes*? If yes, make note of those authorities.

5. Did you have a document *delivered*? If so, in what manner? (Print? Email? Download?)

ASSIGNMENT § 2.9(B) | CORPUS JURIS SECUNDUM ON LEXIS

At the time of publication of this textbook Corpus Juris Secundum is not published on Lexis and thus this assignment is not required.

ASSIGNMENT § 2.9(C) | CORPUS JURIS SECUNDUM IN THE LAW LIBRARY (OPTIONAL)

As with other encyclopedias, when researching in the library, the general rule is to *always begin in the index*. This holds true for *Corpus Juris Secundum*.

1. Locate the General Index, then research key terms

The *C.J.S. General Index*, usually found at the end of the main volumes, is excellent. It is a multivolume, softbound index. Since legal encyclopedias are arranged topically, the index will lead us not to a volume and page number, but to a topic and section number. (For instance, *Depo § 273* in the *General Index* would tell the researcher to find the main *C.J.S.* volume covering the topic of *Depositions* and turn to *Section 273*). If the researcher doesn't understand a specific abbreviation, he or she should look at the beginning of a main volume of *C.J.S.*. for an abbreviation table. Many law books, including *C.J.S.*, have such tables.

The researcher should also observe whether there is a small volume *General Index Update*. This is how the *General Index* is supplemented with more recent information, since softbound volumes usually do not have pocket parts. This update usually comes out midyear. The softbound indexes themselves are typically replaced annually.

ASSIGNMENT QUESTIONS – PART 1

- 1. How many volumes make up the *C.J.S. General Index*?
- 2. Is your research topic covered in the index?
- 3. The C.J.S. index leads to which of the following?
 - a. volume number, series, page number
 - b. a topic and section number
 - c. a topic and key number
- 4. Does the index have a supplement?
- 5. If yes, where is it?
- 6. Is your topic covered in the supplement?
- 7. List any cites to the C.J.S. main volumes the index provides.



CHAPTER 2



2. Locate the Relevant Main Volume and Look for Footnote References



After obtaining a topic and section number from the *General Index*, the researcher must find the main volume covering the topic.

Then the specific section number is found. After the section number, *C.J.S.* will provide a bold-face short statement of the subject matter for that section number, followed by commentary of the subject matter. If any passage in the commentary is relevant, the researcher can refer to the footnote that corresponds to the raised number (footnote reference) in the commentary.

ASSIGNMENT QUESTIONS – PART 2



THE FOUNDATIONS OF LEGAL RESEARCH





Index, Main Volume, and Supplement in C.J.S.

3. Check the Supplement in the Back of the Volume

Each volume of *C.J.S.* is updated annually with a supplement in the back, often called a *pocket part*. Supplements update the material within the hardbound volume.

The purpose of *C.J.S.* is to lead the researcher to primary authority, such as a case or statute. However, before locating the primary authority cited in *C.J.S.*, we must make sure that the material is up to date. The researcher should locate the same topic and section number within the pocket part as he or she researched in the main volume. Thus, if *Witnesses* §§ 52, 67, and 127 were researched in the main volume, *Witnesses* §§ 52, 67, and 127 should also be researched in the pocket part. The researcher should also be aware that if a pocket part becomes too thick, the publisher may update volumes by using a separate softbound supplement.

ASSIGNMENT QUESTIONS – PART 3

- 1. How does C.J.S. update material in the main volume?
- 2. Where does the researcher look in the supplement?
 - a. under the Table of Contents
 - b. corresponding topic and section numbers
 - c. only corresponding section numbers

3. Was there additional material for your research topic in the supplement? If yes, what kind of material?



CHECKLIST – CORPUS JURIS SECUNDUM IN THE LAW LIBRARY

Locate the General Index at the end of the Main Volumes

Research your terms within the General Index

Write down references to Topic and Section Numbers (you need both)

Find the Main Volume corresponding with the Topic & Section Number

Find the *Topic* within that volume

Find the Section Number within that topic

Read the article

Take note of any relevant Footnotes leading to primary authority

Write down the cites to any relevant authority referenced in the Footnotes