

Using a West Digest to Find Cases by Subject

Prepared by Frank Houdek, SIU Law Library — Fall 2006

STEP	NOTES
Step 1: List the key words from the problem to be researched	
Step 2: Decide which digest to use (e.g., state, federal, decennial)	
Step 3: Look up key words from Step 1 in Descriptive Word Index (DWI) of the digest to identify appropriate topics & key numbers	
Step 4: Go to the appropriate digest volume(s) containing the topics & key numbers from Step 3	
Step 5: Locate and review the case summaries (headnotes from reported decisions) listed under the topics & key numbers	
Step 6: Update the digest by checking the same topics & key numbers in the annual pocket parts and/or paperbound supplements for the volumes in question, AND doing the same in any supplementary pamphlets issued since the last annual supplements	
Step 7: Review the “Closing Table” in the latest digest updating tool you used (to determine the last reporter volume covered in that updating tool)	
Step 8: Check the topics and key numbers in the mini-digests provided in each bound volume and advance sheet for the reporter volumes not covered by the digest and its updating tools (as indicated by the Closing Table checked in Step 7)	

