

## **Top 10 Research Skills for Summer Associates in a Law Firm**

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To be an effective researcher a Summer Associate should:

- Be able to develop a research strategy and use legal encyclopedias as a starting point
- Know the difference between primary and secondary sources
- Know how to use Pacer (Public Access to Court Electronic Records)
- Understand the courts structure for the state where they are working
- Be able to find legislation and legislative history on Thomas.gov and the state's site
- Check to see if there are any specialized databases or treatises on the topics
- Have an understanding of state and federal regulatory agencies
- Use Lexis and Westlaw databases – wisely and cost effectively
- Update research – check the pocket parts, Shepardize, KeyCite
- Know when to use online versus print resources

**When all else fails ASK the librarian!!**

Suggested reading:

"Law Firm Legal Research Requirements for New Attorneys" by Patrick Meyer.  
Law Library Journal Vol. 101:3 [2009-17] 297-330