



TRUTH, JUSTICE AND INFORMATION FOR ALL

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Useful Internet Sites and Articles

Casemaker v. Fastcase—What's the Difference?

In June of 2014, the State Bar of Texas became the first state bar association to offer its members free access to both Casemaker and Fastcase. While both are legal research products, there are some differences between the two.



According to the State Bar of Texas website, the Texas Plan is available free to all Texas lawyers and the Premium Plan is available free to solo firms and firms of 10 lawyers or less. The Texas Plan includes Supreme Court of Texas opinions and courts of appeal opinions dating back to 1759, Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals opinions, the United States Code annotated, Texas statutes annotated, the Texas Constitution, and 70 other Texas-specific research libraries. The Premium Plan includes all the resources of the aforementioned Texas Plan, with the addition of national coverage from state and federal courts, state statutes and administrative regulations, nationwide court rules, and constitutions. Bar member access also includes training webinars, tutorials, mobile apps and live customer support with unlimited printing, reference assistance, and customer service. Fastcase includes the following features: mobile sync (with use of the Fastcase app) and Bad Law Bot which shows if a case has a negative history.



Texas bar members receive Casemaker for free, as well as free access to its “premium” services which include Casecheck+, CiteCheck, and CasemakerDigest. Casemaker gives Texas attorneys access to the laws and constitutions of all 50 states, federal law, Texas Attorney General

opinions from 1947, Texas case law since 1886, Texas session laws since 1995, state court rules, and Texas revised statutes with archived versions since 2001. Just like Fastcase, Casemaker offers free webinars and tutorials. Casecheck+ ensures that the case law citations are still good law, CiteCheck shows any negative history and CasemakerDigest is a daily summary of state and federal appellate cases searchable by practice area.

A few months after access to both Fastcase and Casemaker was introduced, the State Bar of Texas *Texas Bar Blog* featured an [article](#) with a review of both services. Attorney Grant Scheiner prefers Fastcase because of its easy transition to smartphones and tablets with the Fastcase app, available on both Android and Apple. The mobile sync feature allows the user to share search results and research materials across all devices at once. Mr. Scheiner also appreciates how Fastcase lists the case search results by relevance and has a date filter which shows the most recent case first. Attorney Deborah J. Bullion prefers Casemaker claiming that research is both easier and quicker with Casemaker. She writes that she appreciates how easy it is to see if a case has been reversed, modified or given favorable or negative treatment all on the same page. The history of the case is easily pulled up and CaseCheck+ shows whether a case is good law with a green thumbs up or if the case is viewed negatively with a red thumbs down. CiteCheck provides a list of linked cases that cite the case, with the relevant portions of linked cases highlighted. Ms. Bullion also prefers Casemaker to search statutes because of the “Annotator” feature which lists cases that cite the statute.

To Access Casemaker and Fastcase from the State Bar of Texas website sign in to “My Bar Page”:

<https://www.texasbar.com/AM/Template.cfm?Section>

Spotlight on the Supremes

On June 14, 2016, the Texas Supreme Court approved a new requirement meant to improve the statewide e-filing system. Attorneys are requested to update their profiles on the State Bar of Texas website to include an electronic service address to serve as their official email address in the e-file system. Courts may also use this email address to send court notices to attorneys or important announcements in the event of an emergency. The email the attorney enters for a service address will not replace the email address used to receive State Bar of Texas communications but the same email may be used for both purposes. Electronic service addresses will “go live” on October 1, 2016. Attorneys must log in to their state bar profile to update this address. Additional information is available on page 532 of the July 2016 edition of the *Texas Bar Journal*. A copy of the Order may be read here: <http://www.txcourts.gov/media/1394492/169095.pdf>.

The Court also signed the Order Approving Amendments to Texas Rules of Evidence 509 and 510 on June 14th, 2016. This Order made slight changes to the rules and the changes became effective immediately. A copy of the Order may be read here: <http://www.txcourts.gov/media/1394495/169094.pdf>.

Did You Know?

The Texas Court of Criminal Appeals signed the Order Mandating Statewide Electronic Filing in Criminal Cases on June 30, 2016. E-filing is not required until 2017 and will be implemented in stages. The counties with the largest population of 500,000 or more will be the first to require e-filing, starting on July 1, 2017. Counties with the least population of 20,000 will be required to e-file starting January 1, 2020. A copy of the Order is available [here](#).

Coming Soon—LexisNexis and Westlaw

Starting September 1st, the Curt B. Henderson Law Library will have patron access to both WestlawNext and Lexis Advance. Two terminals will be available with WestlawNext and two will be available with Lexis Advance. All computers will still have the capability to draft and print documents and the e-filing stations will still remain available. The only change to the computers is the addition of Lexis Advance.

Library Reminders

Several books have been re-shelved incorrectly. Please feel free to leave the books on the table or turn them in to the librarians so that they are shelved correctly and are easy to locate the next time. Also remember that the most current versions of O'Connor's and the Texas Pattern Jury Charges are located behind the reference desk.



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Hours of Operation:
Monday–Friday
8:00 am–5:00 pm

Note: Computers will
automatically log off
at 4:50 p.m.

WestlawNext Tips

WestlawNext Training Class Tips

Thank you to those who came out for our free CLE on June 15th. The class was enjoyable and educational! Here are a few tips we learned:

- 1) **Search by Jurisdiction**— from the homepage the user is able to select what state or court to be researched. For example, the 5th Court of Appeals can be selected as a jurisdiction and only cases from that specific court will appear. To change the jurisdiction, simply click on the setting to the right of the search bar and all available jurisdictions will appear:

- 2) **KeyCite**- KeyCite shows the most severe negative treatment at the top above the case and features a Negative History tab at the top. This tab shows how many cases treated the case as negative and can be opened to view all of the cases.

- 3) **Statutes**—KeyCite is also available when researching statutes. The library patron plan links to any pending legislation which allows the user to see any pending changes to the statute.

- 4) **Appellate Briefs**— the library's patron plan includes access to Texas Appellate Briefs. To access these briefs, simply select "Briefs" from the homepage in the box under the search bar. Once accessed, the user can see the most recent Texas appellate briefs filed or search a topic within Briefs. This search feature shows the actual brief as well as how the case turned out.

Tech Tips: More Useful Apps and Law Blogs

- <http://howappealing.abovethelaw.com/> - Founder and appellate attorney Howard J. Bashman claims his blog is the first blog dedicated to appellate litigation. The blog is updated almost daily and features both nationwide appellate case headlines and articles of interest to appellate attorneys.
- <http://electionlawblog.org/> - a legal blog dedicated to the "law of politics and the politics of law, campaign finance, legislation, voting rights, initiatives, redistricting, and the Supreme Court nomination process." This blog also covers election news and headlines nationwide.
- http://blogs.findlaw.com/legally_weird/ - "The FindLaw Legal Curiosities Blog" This link covers the lighter side of the law. Current topics include Pokémon Go and the Antiques Roadshow.
- Texas Child Support Calculator App—available through both iTunes and Google Play. The app was created by a board certified family law attorney and calculates child support monthly, bi-monthly, every two weeks, and weekly. You must pay for the app.
- TCDLA—a free app available through both iTunes and Google Play for members of the Texas Criminal Defense Lawyers Association.



The Law Library

will be closed

Monday,

September 5th,

2016 for

Labor Day.



New on the Shelf:

- Texas Discovery—a Guide to Taking and Resisting Discovery Under the Texas Rules of Civil Procedure, 2016
- Courtroom Handbook on Texas Evidence, 2016
- DWI Detection and Standardized Field Sobriety Testing, May 2013
- TCDLA Trial Notebook, 7th Edition, 2016
- Texas Punishment, 2016-2017
- Administrative License Revocation and Occupational License Manual, 2015-2016
- Texas Legal Practice Forms, 2016
- The Family Lawyer's Essential Took Kit, 2016
- O'Connor's Texas Family Code, 2016-2017
- O'Connor's Texas Civil Appeals, 2016
- O'Connor's Texas Causes of Action Pleadings, 2016
- Federal Employment Codes Plus, 2016-2017
- O'Connor's Federal Civil Forms, 2016
- Federal Jury Practice and Instructions, 2016
- Navigating the Federal Trial, 2016 Edition
- Internet Legal Research on a Budget

A Little Legal Humor

