

THURGOOD MARSHALL SCHOOL OF LAW LIBRARY

Pathfinder Series

Nanette Collins, Reference Librarian

Revised April 2015

Legal Encyclopedias

**American Jurisprudence 2d (AM. JUR. 2D) &
Corpus Juris Secundum (C.J.S.)**

Legal Encyclopedias

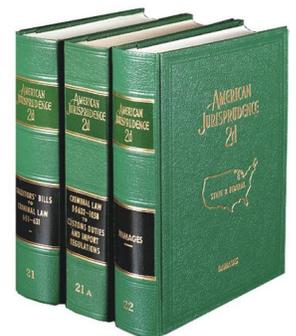
Legal encyclopedias are a secondary authority that is most useful at the beginning of the research process to learn background information on both state and federal law. Legal Encyclopedias provide a broad overview of topics which are arranged alphabetically and subdivided into narrower subtopics. Each topic contains supporting footnotes that provide citations to primary authority

This pathfinder covers the two most popular general Legal Encyclopedias, American Jurisprudence, 2d and Corpus Juris Secundum. Many states have state legal encyclopedias which follow the format of the national encyclopedias but focus on the nature and resources of that state's legal system.

American Jurisprudence 2d (AM. JUR. 2D)

American Jurisprudence provides coverage of all fields of American law – state and federal, civil and criminal, substantive and procedural. The articles collect, examine, and summarize the broad principles of American law and, at the same time, provide:

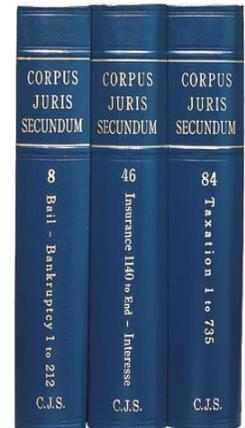
- Direct leads to supporting cases
- Related annotations
- Forms
- Proofs
- Trial techniques



This set is alphabetically arranged in more than 400 topics or chapters. It provides prompt answers to client questions, helps propose sound courses of action, and provides a quick look at unfamiliar areas of the law. A new Topic Service Binder reviews new areas of law until they can be placed accurately within the set.

Corpus Juris Secundum (C.J.S.)

This national legal encyclopedia covers all state and federal legal topics. General rules of law are summarized in "Black Letter" headings and expanded upon in the text. Also provides the limitations and exceptions to the rules where appropriate. Since the citations and the supporting cases involve both state and federal courts, the user gets a full perspective of the law in a local jurisdiction as well as across the country.



How do you research in legal encyclopedias?

1. Consult one of the following to begin your research.

The Index: This is located in multiple separate volumes located at the end of the set. Indexes are published annually, so use the index for the current year. To research comprehensively in an encyclopedia, look up alternative terms, check all cross-references and read through every entry. You may find more than one pertinent topic and you may find references to multiple specific sections within those pertinent topics.

The Topic List: This list appears at the beginning of each index volume labeled as the *Abbreviations of Titles*.. This gives the researcher an overview of all the topics contained in the set and is quicker than the use of an index but does not give information about specific sections within a topic.

Table of Cases (appears in C.J.S. only): This table provides a quick and efficient way to locate those C.J.S. sections where a particular case is discussed. Once you have located the appropriate sections, you will find a comprehensive overview of a particular area of law, including both text discussions and additional on-point citations.

New Topic Service Binder (appears in AmJur only): Use this binder to review new areas of law until they can be placed accurately within the set.

Table of Laws and Rules: If you begin your research with a citation to a federal statute, federal regulation, federal court rule or a pertinent uniform act, consult the *Table of Laws and Rules*. These tables appear in their own volumes and list the topics and sections citing these authorities.

2. Once you have located a potentially useful topic read the introductory material.

This may contain helpful cross-references to other topics and references to other sources.

3. Consult the topic outline.

This shows you the coverage and organization of the topic and permits you to pinpoint the most pertinent sections.

4. Read the pertinent sections.

Read this section to learn pertinent legal rules, principles and to obtain references to other potentially pertinent authorities i.e. citations to case law.

5. Check the pocket parts.

A pocket part is a set of pages inserted into a pocket in the back of bound volume that is used to bring the bound volume up to date. The pocket part may provide additional text with supporting authorities or simply additional references.

Locating AM JUR and C.J.S. in the Thurgood Marshall Law School Library

American Jurisprudence and Corpus Juris Secundum are located on aisle 105 and near the circulation desk.

How to cite AM. JUR. 2D and C.J.S.

Cite AM. JUR. 2d as follows:

- a. The volume number of the encyclopedia;
- b. The abbreviation AM. JUR.2D;
- c. The title of the topic in the encyclopedia in italics;
- d. The section symbol and section number within the topic;
- e. The specific page (if any) being cited within the section; and
- f. The date of publication of the volume as well as any pocket part for the encyclopedia if the reader is specifically referred to the material in it.

Cite C.J.S. as follows:

- a. The volume number of the encyclopedia;
- b. The abbreviation C.J.S.;
- c. The title of the encyclopedia topic in italics;
- d. The section symbol and section number within the topic;
- e. The specific page (if any) being cited within the section; and
- f. The date of publication of the main volume and any pocket part for the encyclopedia if the reader has specifically referred to the material in the pocket part.

Here is an example that follows rule 15.8(a) of *The Bluebook, 19th ed*:

22A AM. JUR. 2D *Dead Bodies* § 12 (2007).

63 C.J.S. *Municipal Corporations* § 747 (1950 & Supp. 2007).