Clio Work vs. LexisNexis vs. Westlaw: Which Legal Research Platform Is Right for You?

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As lawyers and their legal teams juggle complex cases and tight deadlines, reliable legal research is a critical advantage. That's why choosing the right legal research platform matters. With many legal research tools on the market, including some powered or assisted by AI, which platform is right for you and your firm?

Here we explore the research databases to compare and contrast the platforms and to explain how they work for different users. While free legal research tools are available, many firms will consider signing up for one of these top-rated tools.

With Clio Work, legal research is connected directly to your matters, so you can surface relevant case law, analyze documents, and generate insights in context.

Clio Work vs. LexisNexis vs. Westlaw

Clio Work, Lexis and Westlaw are the top research tools for the legal industry. While they have some of the same capabilities, there are key differences between these platforms.

Search capabilities and database breadth

Clio Work database and search capabilities

Clio Work enhances legal research by combining legal-specific AI with matter context, helping lawyers find and apply relevant information faster. Rather than relying on isolated searches, it connects research directly to the facts, documents, and history of a case.

Lawyers can ask natural language legal questions, use familiar search methods like Boolean searches, quickly surface relevant case law and concepts, and analyze uploaded documents to extract key issues, risks, and citations.

Because research happens within the matter workspace, insights are immediately actionable, making it easier to move from research to drafting, strategy, and client advice without switching tools.

Lexis database and search capabilities

Lexis provides a comprehensive legal database. This includes case law, statutes, verdicts, regulations, and legal documents filed with the courts. Lexis also offers secondary sources, guides, and access to news (both legal and non-legal).

A Lexis user can search by citation, browse a topic, enter a natural language query, or use Boolean logic. (Boolean logic uses words such as “and,” “or,” and “not” to narrow down or broaden searches.)

Westlaw database and search

Westlaw also provides excellent coverage of case and statutory law across the U.S. For secondary sources, and offers thousands of practice guides and treatises. As for search options, Westlaw generally allows the same types of searches as the above.

Advanced legal analytics & research tools

The key question in citation analysis is: is it good law? Clio Work, Lexis and Westlaw offer some unique tools that assist with citation analysis. The platforms also provide other advanced research tools, as outlined below.

Clio Work advanced tools

Clio Work brings advanced research and analysis capabilities directly into your matter workflow, using legal-specific AI to help lawyers move from insight to action faster.

Clio Work features the following advanced tools for research and analytics:

- **Matter-aware AI analysis:** Rather than analyzing documents in isolation, Clio Work reviews files within the full context of a matter—surfacing key facts, legal issues, and risks based on the entire case history.
- **Document intelligence and summarization:** Upload contracts, pleadings, or discovery documents and quickly extract key points, timelines, and relevant legal concepts without manual review.
- **Natural language legal research:** Ask questions like “What are the elements of negligence in California?” and receive clear, structured answers grounded in legal context, helping you get oriented faster.
- **Contextual insights and recommendations:** Clio Work connects research insights directly to your matter, helping identify next steps such as additional research areas, drafting opportunities, or strategic considerations.

- **Integrated drafting and follow-through:** Because research is embedded within the matter workspace, lawyers can immediately turn insights into action—whether drafting documents, preparing arguments, or communicating with clients—without switching tools.

Unlike standalone analytics tools, Clio Work focuses on making research usable in real time, reducing the gap between finding information and applying it in practice.

Lexis advanced tools

Lexis features the following advanced tools for research and analytics:

- **Shepard's Citation Service**: This provides an updated view of how courts have treated a particular case or statute.
- **Brief Analysis**: Lexis users can upload a brief or motion and initiate an AI-powered scan of the document with this feature. Brief Analysis will pinpoint the legal concepts from the document and provide recommendations for additional research.
- **Lexis Answers:** This provides answers to natural language questions, such as "What are the elements of breach of contract?", which can be narrowed down to a particular jurisdiction.
- **Search Term Maps:** This tool maps your search terms within a case, empowering users to easily identify patterns and relationships.
- **Ravel View:** Ravel View is a graphic representation of top research results using circles and lines, with larger circles for the most-cited cases and lines displaying the citing relationships with other cases.
- **Lexis+ Litigation Analytics**: This tool provides insights into potential damages, judges, courts, and opposing counsel.

Westlaw advanced tools

Westlaw offers its own advanced features:

- **Keycite:** Keycite will answer the "is it good law?" question for a case, statute, regulation, or administrative decision. For intellectual property purposes, it will also confirm the validity—or lack thereof—of a trademark or patent.
- **Claims Explorer:** Enter the facts of your case and this tool will provide a list of potential legal claims to consider.
- **AI Jurisdictional Surveys:** Input a query on a legal question and receive an AI-generated starting point for research.

- **Quick Check:** When opposing counsel includes a quotation from a cited case, use generative AI to determine whether the quotation is used accurately.

Pricing structures

Clio Work is offered as part of Clio's case management platform, or as a stand-alone tool, with pricing designed to give firms access to AI-powered legal research alongside practice management, billing, and client communication tools. By combining these capabilities in one system, firms can reduce reliance on multiple standalone subscriptions while gaining more value across their workflow.

Lexis+ offers flexible pricing options tailored to firms of different sizes.

Westlaw Precision has separate pricing plans for law firms and general counsel. Firms with a number of attorneys over a certain limit (currently 10) must contact Westlaw sales for pricing.

Demos, free trials, and discounts

Clio Work is available through guided demos and free trials, allowing firms to explore how AI-powered legal research fits into their day-to-day work. Because it's embedded within the Clio platform, firms can evaluate how research, drafting, and matter management work together in a single, connected system.

Lexis+ offers a two-day free trial and free product demos.

Westlaw also offers a free custom demo and a free trial.

Value for money: Clio Work vs. LexisNexis vs. Westlaw

	CLIO WORK	LEXIS+	WESTLAW PRECISION
Search capabilities and database breadth	Matter-aware search across firm data, documents, and legal insights Natural language and Boolean search Global legal database of 1B+ documents across 100+ countries Primary law, secondary sources, and expert commentary across jurisdictions Historical statutes and regulations Proprietary Cert citations Continuously updated content	Comprehensive case and statutory law Secondary sources, guides, and news Natural language and Boolean searches	Comprehensive case and statutory law Extensive practice guides and treatises Natural language and Boolean searches

	CLIO WORK	LEXIS+	WESTLAW PRECISION
Advanced legal analytics and research tools	Matter-based AI analysis AI-generated arguments, insights, and research summaries Document summarization, citation extraction and issue spotting Contextual recommendations Integrated drafting and next-step guidance	Shepard's Citation Service Brief Analysis Lexis Answers Search Term Maps Ravel View Lexis+ Litigation Analytics	KeyCite Claims Explorer AI Jurisdictional Surveys Quick Check
Pricing structures	Available in a bundle with Clio Manage, or as a stand-alone tool.	Flexible pricing options tailored to firms of different sizes	Separate pricing plans for law firms and general counsel
Demos, free trials, and discounts	Free trial and guided demos available within the Clio platform	Free product demo 2-day free trial LexisNexis Rewards program for U.S. law students	Free custom demo Free trial
Value for money	High value for firms looking to consolidate tools and streamline workflows with AI-powered, matter-based research	Higher-priced and potentially more appropriate for larger firms	More affordable and potentially more appropriate for solo practitioners and small firms

How to choose the best solution for your law firm

When deciding which of these research solutions is the best for your firm, take the following considerations into account.

- What is your biggest pain point, or what problem are you trying to solve, and which tool does it better?
- Is price a factor?
- Does one platform offer a solution the other one does not?
- Does one more seamlessly fit into your firm's current tools?
- How important is having AI tools or AI-enabled tools in your firm's decision?

Take advantage of free trials and product demos to explore these issues.

Special considerations for different user groups

For solo practitioners and small firms, Clio Work is the best option as it connects directly to your case management software, offering matter-aware insights, built-in document analysis, and AI-powered research without the need for multiple standalone tools. This makes it easier to manage cases, reduce costs, and streamline day-to-day work from a single platform.

For mid-sized firms, Clio Work helps manage growing complexity by centralizing matters, standardizing workflows, and using AI to surface insights quickly. This allows teams to handle more work efficiently without adding overhead, while improving consistency and collaboration.

For enterprise firms, Vincent by Clio builds on these capabilities with advanced, legal-specific AI powered by a global legal knowledge base. It supports deeper research, more complex analysis, and scalable, secure workflows across large teams and multiple offices.

Ultimately, the right choice depends on how your firm works. Firms prioritizing efficiency, integration, and workflow automation may benefit most from Clio Work, while those focused on highly specialized research depth may lean toward Lexis or Westlaw.

Final thoughts on Clio Work vs LexisNexis vs Westlaw

LexisNexis and Westlaw are both powerful legal research platforms, each offering deep databases and advanced tools. The right choice between them will depend on your firm's research needs, budget, and preferred features.

However, for many firms, the bigger opportunity isn't choosing between two standalone research tools. It's adopting a platform like Clio Work that connects research directly to the work you do every day. By combining legal research, AI-powered analysis, and matter management in one system, Clio Work helps firms move faster, reduce tool sprawl, and turn insights into action without switching between platforms.

If you're looking for a more efficient, integrated way to handle legal research and casework, Clio Work offers a clear advantage.

See how Clio Work can streamline your firm's research and workflows.

Book a Clio demo

Frequently asked questions

What is Clio Work?

Clio Work is Clio's AI-powered legal workspace that brings research directly into your day-to-day casework. Instead of switching between tools, lawyers can conduct legal research within the context of a matter, surfacing relevant case law, analyzing documents, and connecting insights to drafting and next steps in one place.

What is Lexis?

LexisNexis is a company that provides an array of legal and professional solutions and owns some of the top legal publishers, such as Matthew Bender and Martindale-Hubbell. Lexis is the common term for the company's legal research platform. The latest version of the Lexis platform is Lexis+, which incorporates AI-powered tools.

What is Westlaw?

Westlaw is the common term for the Thomson Reuters' legal research platform, with Westlaw Precision being the latest version. Similar to Lexis+, Westlaw Precision harnesses the power of generative AI.

Does Clio have legal research?

Yes, Clio has legal research through **Clio Work**, powered by an AI legal assistant called **Vincent**.Clio Work connects your matters to the world's largest global law library, delivering cited legal research, document analysis, and case strategy. You can ask Vincent research questions, analyze documents, build legal arguments, and compare laws across jurisdictions, with all results grounded in verified sources from a database of over one billion primary law sources from more than 100 countries. What sets it apart is that Clio Work has full context of your matter data, so research and analysis is grounded in the specifics of your cases rather than being generic.Clio Work is available as an add-on and integrates directly with Clio Manage.

Which AI tool is best for legal research?

For legal research, Clio stands out as the best option for law firms.

Unlike standalone AI research tools, Clio Work has full context of your matter data, meaning research and analysis is grounded in the specifics of your cases rather than being generic. It connects your matters to the world's largest global law library, delivering cited legal research, document analysis, and case strategy, backed by over one billion primary law sources from more than 100 countries. You can describe the outcome you want and Vincent will plan and execute the steps autonomously, handling complex, multi-step legal tasks from a single instruction.

Security is built in too, with SOC 2 Type II certification, ISO 27001 compliance, and zero-retention agreements with LLM providers, so sensitive client data stays protected at every stage. For lawyers, it's the natural choice because your matters, documents, and research all live in one place.

Westlaw vs LexisNexis for solo attorneys doing litigation research

Both Westlaw and LexisNexis are capable litigation research tools, but they're expensive standalone platforms with opaque pricing. Firms report paying $150-$400 per user per month for Westlaw alone, with AI features adding even more on top. For solo attorneys Clio Work is the better option. It gives lawyers access to over one billion primary law sources from more than 100 countries, with the added advantage that Clio Work has full context of your matter data, so research is tied directly to your cases rather than happening in a separate tool.

Built on Clio's enterprise-grade infrastructure and certified to SOC 2 Type II, ISO 27001, GDPR, and HIPAA standards, Clio Work ensures nothing leaves its secure environment, gets shared, or is used to train AI models. Confidentiality is never a question.

About Clio

Clio is the global leader in legal AI, powering legal work across the profession, from law firms of every size to corporate legal teams, government agencies, and courts. Its Intelligent Legal Work Platform unites the business and practice of law, connecting the people, information, and processes behind legal work. Clio's AI brings the context together

with legal sources drawn from Clio Library, a growing collection of more than one billion legal documents. Over 400,000 legal professionals in more than 130 countries rely on Clio to run their legal world. Learn more at www.clio.com.