

## Google Scholar Becomes a Better Resource for Lawyers

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### *Google Improves the Search Functionality for its Case Law Research Tool*



We all know that Google isn't just a little ol' search engine; it's a powerhouse! And now, thanks to [Google Scholar](#), the site is giving inhouse counsel, large and small firm attorneys some dynamic legal research tools.

When Google Scholar was first introduced in 2009, [legal blogs](#) took note. Lawyers, it seemed, were excited about the prospect of Google joining the academic research fray - until they actually used the service. Google Scholar proved to be a disappointment to many as it was quite apparent that it just didn't live up to other services like [Westlaw](#) and [Lexis](#).

That may change.

Last week Google Scholar [announced](#) (via [WisBlawg](#)) that it has enhanced its "[Advanced Search](#)" capability to allow users to select a specific federal jurisdiction or state for their search. Users simply select the specific federal court or other jurisdictions they wish to search by

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checking the appropriate box. The more refined and timely Google Scholar becomes, the more lawyers can actually consider using it in their practice over other fee-based options.

Keep in mind - again - that Scholar is a free service. It will generally return fewer results than subscription services. However, there are a few shining advantages, like:

- **Many articles are available full-text.**
- **Google Scholar can connect you to library resources.**
- **It covers a wide range of academic and legal content areas and is continually being updated.**
- **It ranks and lists results according to how relevant they are to the search query.**

The downside?

Google Scholar is prone to spam. It is also not able to shepardize case law, as Westlaw and Lexis can.

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