

## Legal Research Prompts

Generate structured legal research frameworks, precedent matrices, strategic case analysis, and litigation-ready argument systems without drowning in disorganized case summaries.

Difficulty: Advanced

Model: ChatGPT / Claude

Use Case: Legal Research

Updated: May 2026

Why This Prompt Exists

Most AI-generated legal research suffers from the same problem: too much information and not enough structure.

Attorneys and legal researchers rarely need “more cases.” They need usable strategic intelligence. They need to understand which authority controls, which language persuades, where opposing counsel is vulnerable, and how factual patterns influence outcomes.

This framework forces the model to behave less like a law student collecting citations and more like an experienced litigation strategist organizing research for real-world use.

The Prompt

Assume the role of a senior legal research strategist with extensive experience supporting complex litigation, motion practice, appellate briefing, and procedural analysis across state and federal courts.

Your objective is not merely to summarize cases, but to organize the legal landscape into a practical litigation tool that helps shape argument strategy, anticipate opposing counsel, and identify controlling authority.

Approach the research like a working litigation team preparing for briefing, hearings, negotiation leverage, or trial positioning.

Conduct the research methodically:

- Begin with controlling Supreme Court or highest-state-court authority.
- Move downward into controlling circuit, appellate, or state-level precedent.
- Then identify persuasive lower-court applications and procedural trends.
- Distinguish binding authority from persuasive authority.
- Identify factual similarities and differences between cases.
- Extract quotable judicial language useful for motions and briefing.
- Analyze unfavorable authority and explain strategic vulnerabilities.
- Identify splits in reasoning, evolving standards, or unsettled questions.
- Organize the legal standards into clear hierarchical frameworks.
- Highlight which cases appear most strategically valuable.

Do not produce academic-style legal writing.

Produce organized litigation intelligence designed for practical use by attorneys, legal researchers, or pro se litigants preparing arguments.

INFORMATION ABOUT MY RESEARCH:

Legal Issue or Question:

[INSERT LEGAL ISSUE]

Jurisdiction:

[INSERT COURT / CIRCUIT / STATE]

Procedural Context:

[INSERT MOTION, APPEAL, CLAIM, OR DEFENSE]

Key Sub-Issues:

[INSERT SPECIFIC ELEMENTS OR NUANCES]

Relevant Facts:

[INSERT FACTUAL SUMMARY]

**MOST IMPORTANT:**

Structure the response using the following sections:

1. Executive Research Summary
2. Binding Authority Matrix
3. Persuasive Authority Matrix
4. Contrary Authority & Risk Analysis
5. Legal Standard Breakdown
6. Factual Pattern Comparison
7. Strategic Litigation Insights
8. Recommended Lead Cases
9. Citation & Authority Relationships

## 10. Research Methodology Notes

### Formatting Requirements:

- Use clean section headers.
- Use tables where useful.
- Clearly distinguish controlling authority from persuasive authority.
- Use proper legal citations.
- Keep explanations concise but strategically useful.
- Prioritize clarity and tactical usefulness over excessive detail.

### How To Use It

- Be extremely specific about jurisdiction. Legal research quality collapses quickly when the AI is forced to guess controlling authority.
- Include procedural posture whenever possible. A summary judgment motion requires different analysis than a motion to dismiss or appellate brief.
- Use concise factual summaries instead of emotional narratives. AI responds better to structured facts.
- If researching unsettled law, explicitly ask the model to identify jurisdictional splits and emerging trends.
- For motion drafting, ask the model to extract “most quotable language” from each lead case.
- Always independently verify citations, holdings, procedural posture, and Shepardization before relying on any output.

### Example Use Cases

#### **Motion Practice:**

Organize precedent supporting dismissal, suppression, summary judgment, or evidentiary

exclusion.

**Appellate Strategy:**

Map controlling standards of review and identify favorable appellate reasoning patterns.

**Settlement Leverage:**

Analyze litigation risk based on factual similarities to successful or unsuccessful cases.

**Pro Se Research:**

Create structured overviews of unfamiliar procedural or constitutional issues.

Why It Works

Most prompts fail because they ask AI to “research the law” without defining strategic objectives.

This framework constrains the model in useful ways:

- It prioritizes hierarchy of authority instead of dumping random cases.
- It forces factual comparison rather than shallow summarization.
- It separates persuasive authority from binding precedent.
- It anticipates contrary authority before opposing counsel does.
- It transforms research into briefing strategy instead of raw information overload.

In practice, the quality of legal AI outputs improves dramatically when the model is instructed to think like litigation support rather than an encyclopedia.

Advanced Variations

- Add: “Generate oral argument vulnerabilities opposing counsel may exploit.”
- Request a “judicial temperament analysis” for frequently cited judges within the jurisdiction.

- Ask for “best factual analogies” between your case and favorable precedent.
- Request “motion-ready argument outlines” built directly from extracted case language.
- Combine with docket research tools and public filings for deeper strategic analysis.

## Common Mistakes

AI legal research should never replace independent legal verification.

Large language models can organize, summarize, compare, and structure information impressively well, but hallucinated citations and procedural inaccuracies remain possible.

The most effective legal AI workflows combine:

- AI-assisted structuring
- Verified legal databases
- Human judgment
- Jurisdiction-specific expertise

## Build Better AI Systems

Subscribe for advanced prompts, AI workflow systems, prompt engineering insights, and practical frameworks designed for real-world use.

Carefully engineered prompts for people doing real work.

### Share this:

- [Share on Facebook \(Opens in new window\) Facebook](#)
- [Share on X \(Opens in new window\) X](#)