



BECOMING A LAWYER

A lawyer, also called an attorney, gives legal advice to people, government agencies, and businesses. They offer representation when needed, prepare legal documents, and interpret laws, regulations, and rulings.

Is Law the Right Career for You?

Start by answering the following questions:

- Have you completed an informational interview of a current lawyer?
- Are you a disciplined, hard worker?
- Do you have strong analytical, research, and writing skills?
- Are you willing to spend at least 7 years in college (4+ years for B.A./B.S. and 3 years in law school)?

If you answered yes to these questions, a career in law may be a good fit for you!



Sample Job Title	Median Wages	Required Education
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Lawyer • Family Lawyer • Immigration Lawyer • Judge 	In CA: \$71,550 - \$171,550* In LA/OC Area: \$176,020 <small>*Median wages in the law field differ significantly based on specialization and geographic area. For more information visit CareerOneStop.org/Salary</small>	Doctorate Degree: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Juris Doctor (J.D.)

Choosing a Major for Law

There is **no required or preferred undergraduate major** for law school. Instead, law schools look for an undergraduate background that sharpens analytical reasoning and writing skills. Consider a major that interests you and could lead to an alternate career, if necessary.

Preparing for Law School

As an undergraduate student, there are several things you can do now to prepare for law school:

- Maintain a **high GPA**; grades are a major factor in the selection process.
- **Connect** with faculty and professionals. Remember, most programs will require a letter of recommendation.
- Acquire excellent **research and writing skills**.
- Gain **exposure to law** through volunteering, work, or job shadowing.
- Join a **pre-law club**, or start one if it doesn't already exist at your college.
- **Study** for the Law School Admission Test (LSAT).

Applying to Law School

Apply to law school programs using the **Law School Admission Counsel (LSAC)**. This centralized application service also has a school directory with information on requirements and deadlines for various law programs. Visit lsac.org for more information.

RESOURCES

Professional Organizations

- Law School Admission Council (lsac.org)
- The Association of American Law Schools (aals.org)
- American Bar Association (americanbar.org)

Podcasts

- Law School Toolbox (lawschooltoolbox.org)
- LSAT Unplugged + Law School Admissions (lsatunplugged.libsyn.com)
- Above the Law - Thinking like a Lawyer (abovethelaw.com)

Areas of Law

There are many areas of law that you can specialize in. You are not expected to know the exact area of law you want to practice in before you attend law school. However, it is helpful to gain knowledge on the various areas of law as you decide your career path.

- Animal Law
- Civil Rights Law
- Corporate Law
- Criminal Law
- Education Law
- Employment and Labor Law
- Environmental and Natural Resources Law
- Family and Juvenile Law
- Health Law
- Immigration Law
- Intellectual Property Law
- International Law
- Municipal Law
- Real Estate Law
- Securities Law
- Sports and Entertainment Law
- Tax Law

Related Occupations

Not sure becoming a lawyer is the right fit for you? Here are some related careers with different educational requirements.

Job Title	Median Wages in CA	Required Education	Holland Code*
Arbitrator/Mediator	\$97,430	Bachelor's Degree	SE
Paralegal/Legal Assistant	\$61,240	Associate's Degree	CIE
Court Reporter	\$89,990	Certificate	CE

* **What's a Holland Code?** This refers to a career assessment that measures your personality type across 6 areas: *Realistic, Investigative, Artistic, Social, Enterprising, and Conventional*. A Holland Code allows you to connect your personality directly with occupations! Find out your code at mynextmove.org/explore/ip

