**How to Become a Lawyer:**

**What You Should Know First**

With the prevalence of court television and legal drama series, many young people have their heart set on becoming a lawyer when they graduate from high school. However, the process is long and fraught with many potholes. A career as lawyer is one of the most highly sought-after professions on the globe. Indeed, there are many [rewards to working as a lawyer](https://www.thebalance.com/top-reasons-to-become-a-lawyer-2164599). However, attorney work has its drawbacks as well.  Here is an outline of the general process and things to keep in mind along the way.

**Education after school:** Obtaining a law degree will take seven years of additional education after high school. Four of those years are spent obtaining an undergraduate degree in a related or unrelated field. Law school itself takes three years. The undergraduate degree must be achieved in a type of bachelor’s study in order to qualify for admission to law school. There are many part-time or night options for students that also have to work.

**Law school acceptance**: Gaining acceptance into law school is a competitive process that involves entrance examinations, applications, interviews, and a resume with previous work experience if applicable. It can be very difficult to make your application stand out from thousands of other applications unless you have extremely remarkable examination scores or work experience that is exceptional. The specific law schools determine how much weight they give to each item and this can vary dramatically from school to school.

**Law school curriculum:** Law school is divided up in to different sections for each year. The first year is often spent on core courses, while later years involve practical aspects. There are also programs that extend beyond law school in order to assist lawyers in specializing at certain areas of complicated law. Other attorneys may decide they would rather perform research or teach than practice the type of courtroom law we often see on television.

**After graduation:** Once you graduate from law school, your education is not complete. Almost all state licensure boards require their lawyers to stay abreast of developments in legal proceedings by continuing their education. Many law schools and the associated state bar organizations will provide courses and conferences to help their attorneys stay on top of recent developments in the legal process and proceedings. With the development of the internet, some state bar associations have online courses that also count toward the continuing education requirements.

If you want to become a lawyer, it is best to keep in mind that it is a lot of hard work and involves a significant amount of money invested in tuition. However, dedicated students that work hard and develop a strong ethic can be extremely successful in both the classroom and the courtroom. Therefore, it is important for a person to learn as much about the profession as possible before you beginning a career path as a lawyer.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Think about the possible benefits of working as an attorney. What do you think are the **TOP** reasons why people become lawyers? List at least three reasons.
2. Keep in mind that that a career as an attorney has also has its drawbacks. What do you think are the **WORST** things about having a career as a lawyer? List at least three.