

Pathways to Law

What does it take to become a lawyer? The path is not easy, but we know you are capable and we are here to support you along the way. Here's an overview of the steps you will take on your way to becoming an attorney in Ohio.



High School

High school takes four years for most students. Some schools offer job training programs to enter the workforce sooner. Some schools offer advanced placement classes that count towards college credit. Taking these classes can bring down the cost of college and help you graduate from college faster.



SAT/ACT

Before you enter college, most universities require either an SAT or ACT score. The highest score on the SAT is 1800 and the highest score on the ACT is 36. Higher scores can open up more colleges and even scholarship opportunities to help you pay for school.



College or University

Most law schools require a 4-year degree before you enter. In college, you can choose a major—a specific area of study—that you will focus on during your college years. Some students choose a minor—a specific area of study smaller than a major—as well. Most colleges require you to choose a major but minors are always optional.

In most cases, depending on your major, you will earn either a Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) or Bachelor of Science (B.S.) when graduating from a 4-year university. There are a lot of opinions on which major prepares someone for law school the best. However, law schools don't require any specific major and accept students of all different educational backgrounds. Work with your career and academic advisors to help you choose a major that best suits you.



Law School Admission Test (LSAT)

The Law School Admission Test (LSAT) is a standardized test required by most law schools. Unlike the SAT and ACT, there is no math on the LSAT. The LSAT tests things like reading comprehension, reasoning, and writing. Like the SAT and ACT, a higher LSAT score will open up more law schools and more scholarship opportunities. The highest score on the LSAT is 180.



Law School

Law school takes 3 years to complete, though some schools have programs where you can complete your law degree in less than three years or take part-time classes and complete your degree in four years.

Law schools don't have majors, but many students choose classes based on their particular career goals. The main goal of law school is to teach you to “think like a lawyer.” Lawyers have a particular way of thinking that helps them see both sides of an issue and exercise good judgment—skills essential for leadership. No matter what law school you go to, you will learn the basics of law and how to think like a lawyer.

Law students graduate as a Juris Doctor (J.D.). However, having the J.D. does not automatically make you a lawyer.



State Bar Exam

The last (and biggest) test you will take before becoming a lawyer is the Bar Exam. Every state has their own set of laws, and sometimes the details of the law vary from state to state. The bar exam differs from state to state. The test is designed to make sure you have a basic understanding of the law that every lawyer should know, and the specific laws in your state.



Licensed Attorney (Esquire)

To practice law you need a license from the state you where you will practice. Once you pass the bar exam along with a character and fitness exam you will become an attorney! Just like members of the military and most political leaders, lawyers take an oath to uphold the U.S. Constitution. With great power comes great responsibility!