

Talking Democracy

A civic education kit about
elections in Victoria



Animation script

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Introduction



Good morning, this is the Victorian Electoral Commission. My name is Sonia. How may I help you?



Hi my name is Mohammed. I am a student and I have homework about the Australian government and elections. My teacher told me to ring you for information. Can I ask you some questions?



Hi Mohammed, yes, I can give you the information you need. What would you like to know?

Why is voting important?

Why does the teacher say that voting is important in Australia?

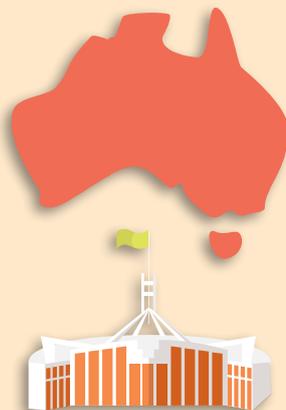
Because Australia is a democracy. We vote for people who make laws and decide on services for us. That is why voting is very important.



Levels of government

How many levels of government are there in Australia?

In Australia, there are three levels of government: Federal, State and local.



Federal



State



Local

Federal Government

How do they differ?

This is Australia's Parliament House. It has two houses: House of Representatives or Lower House and Senate or Upper House.

The Federal Government is in Canberra. It makes decisions for all of Australia. For example: immigration, tax, Centrelink, Medicare and defence.

The leader of the Federal Government is the Prime Minister.

Parliament of Australia

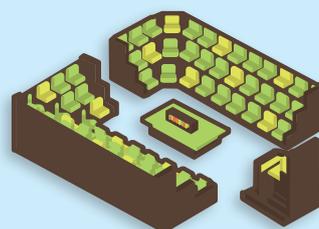


Prime Minister



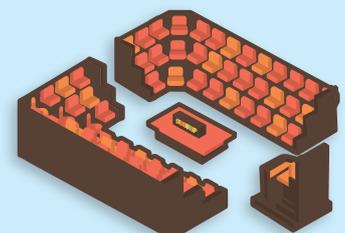
House of Representatives

Lower House



Senate

Upper House



State Government

What about the State Government?

This is Parliament House Victoria.

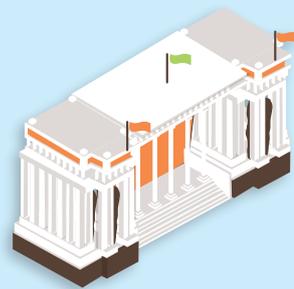
It also has two houses: Legislative Assembly or Lower House and Legislative Council or Upper House.

The Victorian Government is in Melbourne.

It makes decisions for the State of Victoria. For example: schools, hospitals, public transport, housing and police.

The leader of the State Government is the Premier.

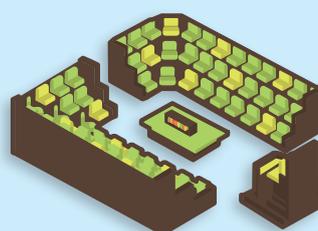
Parliament of Victoria



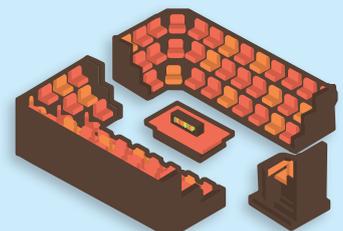
Premier



Legislative Assembly Lower House



Legislative Council Upper House



Local Councils

And Local Government?

Local Government or local council.

You vote in the council area in which you live.

Local councils make decisions about local issues.

Councils look after rubbish collection, parks, community centres, childcare, parking, libraries, swimming pools, youth centres, cultural festivals and other services.

The leader of your local council is the Mayor.

Local Council



Mayor



What does the VEC do?

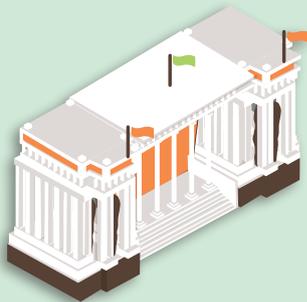
What does the Victorian Electoral Commission do?

The VEC is an independent organisation. We are not a government department. We run State and Local Government elections, and other community polls. We teach people how to vote correctly. We also look after the electoral roll.

What is the electoral roll?

It is a list of Australian citizens aged 18 and over who have enrolled to vote. It shows their name and current address.

Runs elections



State



Local

Looks after electoral roll



Teaches people how to vote correctly



Who can vote

Who can vote in Australia?

All Australian citizens aged 18 and over must enrol and must vote at every Federal, State and local council election.

Non-citizens who pay council rates can enrol to vote at council elections only. This is a special rule.

Are you enrolled to vote?

No

Are you an Australian citizen and over 18 years old?

Yes. I am. How do I enrol?

You can get an enrolment form from a post office, fill it in and send it to the VEC. If you want help to fill in a form, please ring us on 131 832 or on an interpreter line 9209 0112. You can also get one from our website vec.vic.gov.au

Thank you for the information. I will get an enrolment form after this conversation.

What happens if I move house?

It is very important that you let us know if you move to a new place or change your name. You can use an enrolment form to update your details and send it to us.

Over 18 years



Australian citizen



Enrolled



How do I vote?

How do I vote?

In Australia, we use numbers when voting. Let's look at how to **vote in Victorian State elections**. You get two **ballot papers**: a smaller one for the Lower House and a bigger one for the Upper House.

To vote for the Lower House, write 1 next to the name of the candidate you would most like to win the election. Then write 2 for the **candidate** you like second, 3 for the one you like third and so on, until every box is numbered.

To vote for the Upper House, you can vote **above-the-line** or **below-the-line**.

To vote above-the-line, pick one party who you want to win and write the number 1 in a box next to the party's name above the black line.

To vote below-the-line, you need to pick at least five candidates.

Write the number 1 in the box next to the candidate you would most like to win the election. Then write 2 for the candidate you like second, 3 for the one you like third, 4 for the one you like fourth and 5 for the one you like fifth. You can number more candidates if you wish, but you must choose at least five candidates.

Can the VEC teach us how to vote?

Yes, we can. Please contact us. We can come to you and teach your community how to vote.

Do I have to vote if I am overseas when there is an election?

You are encouraged to vote, but you will not be fined if you do not vote. Please keep your tickets to show us that you were overseas.

Lower House



Upper House



Ballot box



Conclusion

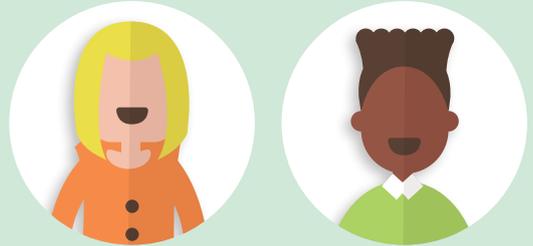
*Hmmm, ok. I think I can do my homework now.
Thank you very much for your help.*

If you need more information, you can visit our website vec.vic.gov.au, send an email to info@vec.vic.gov.au or ring us again.

We also have an interpreter line 9209 0112 or contact us on 133 677 through the National Relay Service. We will be happy to help you.

Thank you. Bye.

Bye Mohammed. Good luck with your homework.



Glossary

Australian citizen	A person who was born in Australia. Or a person who was born overseas but now lives in Australia. This person has made a special promise to follow all the laws of Australia. This person has become an Australian citizen.
Australian Federal Government	The largest group of people in Federal
Ballot box	A box in the voting centre where you put your filled-in ballot paper.
Ballot paper	A sheet of paper you write your vote on.
Candidate	A person who wants to represent you in parliament.
Democracy	A country where people have the right to vote for who is in charge.
Election	Choosing someone or making a choice by voting.
Enrol	Put your name on a list to vote.
Election day	The day you go to vote.
Electoral roll	It is a list of Australian citizens aged 18 and over who have enrolled to vote. It shows their name and current address.
Local council	A group of people who provide services for people who live that area.
Local Government	A group of people who are chosen by local people to represent their local issues.
Mayor	The leader of your local council.
Premier	The leader of the State Government.
Prime Minister	The leader of the Federal Government.
Victorian State Government	Largest group of people in State Parliament is called the Victorian State Government. The State Government is in charge of Victoria.
Victorian State Parliament	A group of people who are chosen by the people in Victoria to represent them.
Vote or voting	To make your choice on your ballot paper.
Voter	An Australian citizen who is enrolled and has a legal right to vote.

Key words

Ballot paper

Candidate

Compulsory

Democracy

Election

Electoral roll

Enrol

Enrolment form

Federal Government

Government

House of Representatives

Leader

Legislative Assembly

Legislative Council

Local council

Local Government

Lower House

Mayor

Parliament

Premier

Prime Minister

Senate

State Government

Victorian Electoral Commission

Vote or Voting

Voter

Update

Upper House

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