



Tips for going to court without a lawyer

This fact sheet has practical tips to help you when you go to court without a lawyer.

What should you do before you go to court?

It is important to get legal advice before you go to court for the first time. You might be able to get advice from Legal Aid WA or another legal service.

Being prepared before you go to court will really help you on the day. Make sure you get your court paperwork ready and keep it safe. It often helps to write down your story of what happened in your case.

What should you do on the day you go to court?

It is important to wear clothes that are respectful. Do not wear singlets or thongs.

You should arrive 15 minutes early and give yourself time to deal with traffic and find parking. If you are late for court, the Magistrate may decide what happens in your case without you. If you are on bail and miss court, the police may arrest you.

When you get to the court building, find out what room you have to go to. There might be a list on the wall, or you can ask someone to show you where to go.



What should you do inside the court room?

Inside the court room, you should:

- » Remove sunglasses, hats, and your headphones.
- » Turn off your mobile phone and electronic devices.
- » Stand and bow when the Magistrate enters or leaves the court.
- » Call the Magistrate 'Your Honour'.
- » Listen carefully to what is happening in court and be respectful when people are talking.
- » Not eat, drink, or chew gum.
- » Be aware that the first time you go to court is usually not the trial day. If you are going to trial, there will be more things you need to do to prepare. This might include arranging any witnesses to come to court on the day.

Where can you get more information?

For more information on what to do if you are going to court without a lawyer, visit the Legal Aid WA website and search 'tips for going to court'. You can also call the Legal Aid Infoline on 1300 650 579 or for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders callers, Legal Yarn on 1800 319 803.