Law Background

Lawyers perform a valuable role, especially as law is intertwined with every aspect of our society - from the age at which you can take your driving test to the speed at which you can drive when you pass it; from the minimum wage you can expect to earn in a new job to the rights you have should you lose it. When you consider moving into the legal profession, there are a lot of opportunities, depending on your values and areas of interest. One can serve in more of the advising capacity, providing assistance and research to companies or lawyers. Or one can serve as a lawyer in court, representing clients. This link has some great information on law: www.lawcareers.net/Assets/BeginnersGuide2016.pdf

Employment in Law

ACADEMIA
Some lawyers choose to use their education for the good of students. Colleges employ lawyers to serve as faculty or administration at the institution. Some lawyers serve as council members for legal disputes and represent staff, faculty, and students at the institution.

CORPORATE LAW
Individuals in this realm work for businesses and provide counsel on transactions and policies. Corporate work often concerns mergers and acquisitions, demergers, joint ventures and share issues.

CRIMINAL LAW
Criminal lawyers advise and represent their clients in court on criminal charges that can range from minor motoring misdemeanors to more serious crimes, including murder.

FAMILY LAW
Family lawyers deal with all legal matters relating to marriage, separation, divorce, cohabitation and legal issues relating to children, including payment and support.

ENTREPRENEUER
Smaller, start-up companies hire lawyers to help them with efforts to create sustainable business plans.

HUMAN RIGHTS LAW
Human rights law is broad-reaching and focuses on many of the social issues that face our country. Individuals may tackle cases involving immigration or education reform.

PRIVATE LAW
Private client lawyers advise on all aspects of the financial affairs of clients, including capital gains tax, inheritance tax planning, setting up lifetime trusts and preparing wills. Private lawyers may also work with charities.

PUBLIC LAW
Public law concerns relationships between people and government. This might mean challenging the level of care provided to a disabled person by a local authority, or on a larger scale, advising the government on national infrastructure development, such as a new energy or transport project.
Education & Next Steps

If you are looking into a career in law, you will need to attend law school in order to have the most opportunities.

**Juris Doctorate (J.D) in Law OR Legum Magister (LLM)**

Most individuals will matriculate to law school for their J.D. Take a look at programs of interest, as each have their own specialization. If you know that you will be moving into higher education, particularly teaching law, you can also obtain a Ph.D.

The LLM essentially means master of laws in Latin. Typically, the LLM is a one-year course of full-time study and is pursued after earning the J.D. The curriculum for an LLM varies depending on the program; some programs provide a broad curriculum in American law, the US or Canadian legal system, and international law; others provide more specialized courses in subfields such as taxation, intellectual property, and human rights law.

**Recommendations**

One of the most important recommendations for a career in law is to keep up-to-date with current news and happenings. This can be useful for interviewing with law schools and with the application process, especially your personal statement. In addition, you should also consider joining professional associations. We have included some of this information below for ease of use.

---

**Resources in Law**

**Top 10 Law Firms (Vault, 2015)**

Wachtell, Lipton, Rosen & Katz  
Cravath, Swaine & Moore  
Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom  
Sullivan & Cromwell  
Davis Polk & Wardwell  
Simpson Thacher & Bartlett  
Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton  
Weil, Gotshal & Manges  
Kirkland & Ellis  
Latham & Watkins


**Professional Associations**

- American Bar Association  
- American Health Lawyers Association  
- International Bar Association  
- Minority Corporate Counsel Association  
- National Association of Women Lawyers

**Law Stats (American Bar Association, 2014)**

- 1,300,705 Active Lawyers  
- Top 2 States of Practice:  
  - New York (172,630)  
  - California (165,952)  
- 2009-2013 Data – Admissions  
  - 22,283 Male Full-Time Enrollment  
  - 19,450 Female Full-Time Enrollment

---

**Job Boards & Sites**

- lawjobs.com  
- careerbuilder.com  
- findlaw.com  
- lawcrossing.com