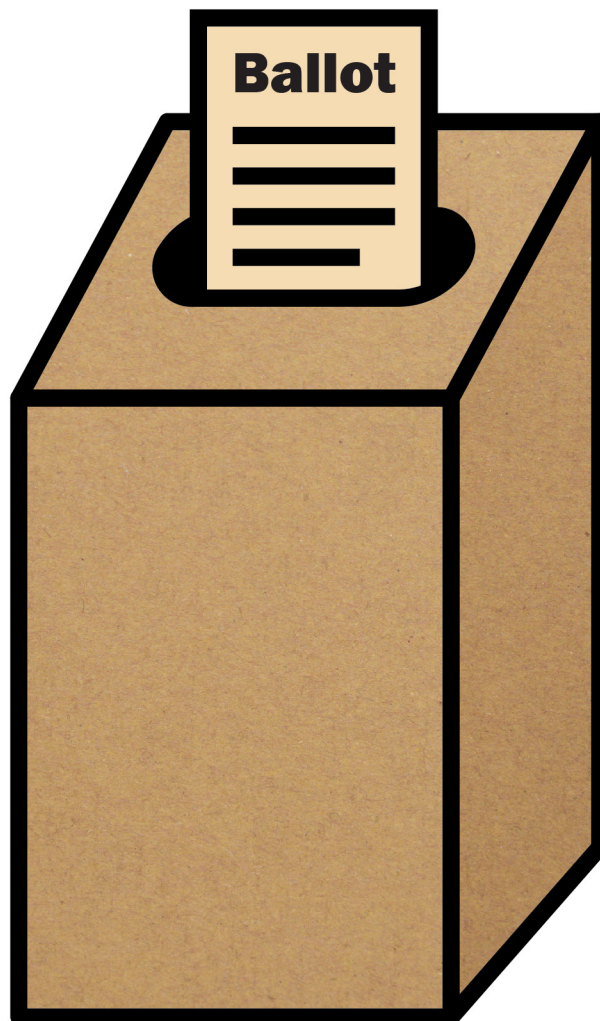


How to vote in a referendum

An Easy Read guide



How to use this guide



The Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) wrote this guide.

When you see the word 'we', it means AEC.



We wrote this guide in an easy to read way.

We use pictures to explain some ideas.

Bold
Not bold

We wrote some important words in **bold**.

This means the letters are thicker and darker.



We explain what these words mean.

There is a list of these words on page 27.



You can find other Easy Read guides on our website.

www.aec.gov.au



You can ask for support to read this guide.

A friend, family member or support person may be able to help you.

What's in this guide?

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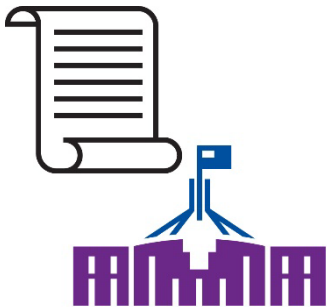
Word list 27

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Voting in a referendum



When you **vote**, you help to choose if the Australian people change the Constitution.



The Australian **Constitution** is a set of rules that are used to run Australia.



When you vote in a **referendum**, you help to decide if Australia should change the Constitution.

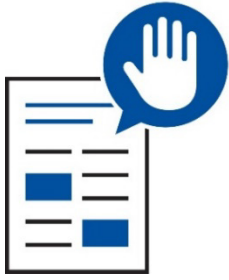


Parliament makes laws for Australia.

Australians have a say about who will be in Parliament.



Some members of Parliament will write why they want the Constitution to change.



Other members of Parliament will write why they want it to stay the same.



We will send this information to your address.



Then you can decide if you want to vote 'YES' or 'NO' in the referendum.



Before you can vote, you **enrol**.



When you enrol, we put your name on a list of **voters** – people who can vote.

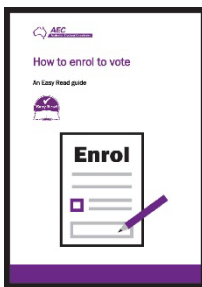
We call this list the **electoral roll**.



If you are on the electoral roll, you are also enrolled for referendums.



To go on the electoral roll, you must fill out an enrolment form on paper or online.



You can read our guide that explains how to enrol – *How to enrol to vote*.



You must enrol and vote if you are:

- an Australian **citizen**
- and
- aged 18 years old or older.



A citizen is someone who has the rights and freedoms of the country where they live.

When do you need to vote?



The Prime Minister will set the date for the referendum.

We will tell people what the referendum date is once we know.



If you want to find out when voting day is, you can:

- visit our website www.aec.gov.au
- call us on **13 23 26**.

You can also:



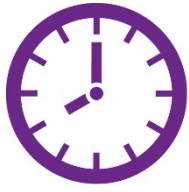
- ask a family member, friend or neighbour



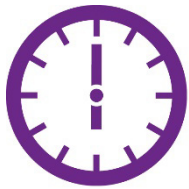
- watch the news on TV



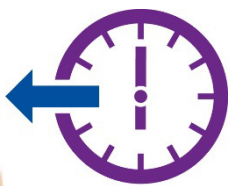
- search online



On voting day, voting opens at **8am**.



And it closes at **6pm**.



You must vote before voting closes.

What if you can't vote on voting day?



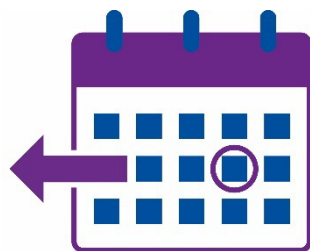
Sometimes, people can't vote on voting day.



This might be because they are going away on holiday.



Or maybe they will be in hospital.



If you can't vote on the day, you can vote before voting day.



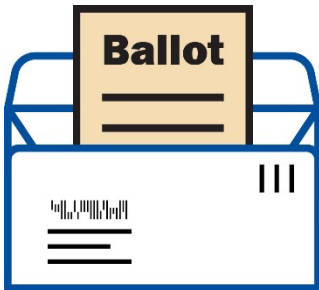
We explain where you can go to vote in the next section.

You can go to some of these places before voting day.



If you call us, we will help you to find a place where you can vote early near you.

13 23 26



You can also send us your vote in the mail.

We call this a **postal vote**.



You can read about how to vote by mail in our guide – *How to vote by mail*.

Where do you go to vote?



On voting day, you go to a **polling place** to vote.

A polling place is a building where people go to vote.



For example, a:

- school
- community centre.



When we know the date of the referendum, we will put a list of polling places on our website.

www.aec.gov.au



If you call us, we will help you find a polling place.

13 23 26



You can vote at any polling place in the state or territory where you live.



If you are in a different state or territory on voting day, you can vote at an interstate voting centre.

What happens on voting day?

Outside the polling place

Outside the polling place, you will see:



- voters



- people who support the 'YES' and the 'NO' vote.



The people who support the 'YES' and the 'NO' vote will be handing out *How to vote* cards.



How to vote cards suggest how you might choose to vote.



You don't have to take any *How to vote* cards.

Inside the polling place



When you get inside the polling place, there will be AEC staff.



They are people who work at polling places on voting day.

It is their job to help you.



When you get inside the polling place,
you might need to wait in line.



If there is no line, you can go straight to a table
and talk to the AEC staff.

What will the AEC staff do?



The AEC staff will ask you **3** questions.

1. What is your full name?



Tell the AEC staff your:

- first name
- last name.



You must tell them the same name you told us when you enrolled to vote.

2. Where do you live?



Tell them the address of your home.

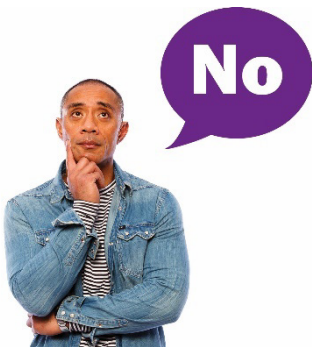
You must tell them the same address you told us when you enrolled to vote.



The AEC staff will:

- look for your name on the electoral roll and
- mark it off.

3. Have you voted before in this referendum?



Say “No” if you haven’t already voted:

- on voting day
- before voting day, such as by a postal vote.



The AEC staff will give you a **ballot paper**.

A ballot paper is the form that you fill out to show how you want to vote.

What do you do with your ballot paper?



Take your ballot paper to one of the cardboard voting screens.



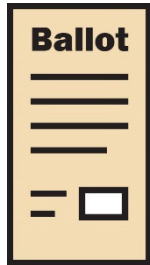
The screens let you fill out your ballot paper where no one else can see.



There will be a pencil for you to use.

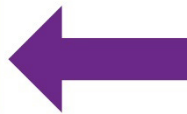
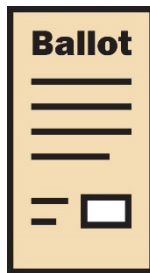
But you can use your own pen or pencil if you want to.

How do you fill out your ballot paper?



You need to follow the instructions on the ballot paper for your vote to count.

The instructions will ask if you want the Constitution to change.



You can write 'YES' or 'NO' in the box at the bottom of your ballot paper.

YES



If you agree to changing the Constitution, write 'YES' in the box.

NO



If you don't agree to changing the Constitution, write 'NO' in the box.

What if you need help to fill out your ballot paper?

If you need help to vote, you can:



- take a family member or friend with you



- ask the AEC staff.



The AEC staff can help you fill out your ballot paper.



They can't tell you how to vote.



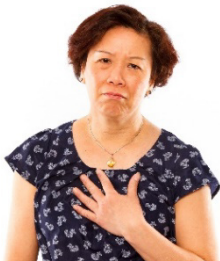
They will keep your vote a secret.

What if you make a mistake?

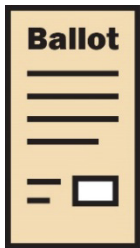


If you make a mistake when you fill out your ballot paper, take it back to the AEC staff member who gave it to you.

Tell the AEC staff member that you:



- made a mistake



- need a new ballot paper.



The AEC staff will:

- take the ballot paper with the mistake
- give you a new ballot paper.



Take the new ballot paper and fill it out.

Where do you put your ballot paper?



When you have filled out your ballot paper, you need to put it in a **ballot box**.



A ballot box is a sealed box where voters put their ballot paper once they have filled it out.



If you need help, you can ask the AEC staff.



When you have put your vote in the ballot box, you have finished voting.

Can you practise voting before the referendum?



If you want to practise voting, you can visit our website.

www.aec.gov.au/practice



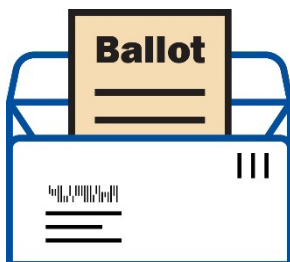
Your practice vote doesn't count.

You still need to vote:



- at a polling place

or



- by mail.

How can you get more information?



If you want to find out more about voting, we have 2 other guides you can read:

- *How to enrol to vote*
- *How to vote by mail.*



You can find these guides on our website.

www.aec.gov.au/assistance



We also have information on our website for people who speak languages other than English.

Word list



Ballot box

A ballot box is a sealed box where voters put their ballot papers once they have filled them out.



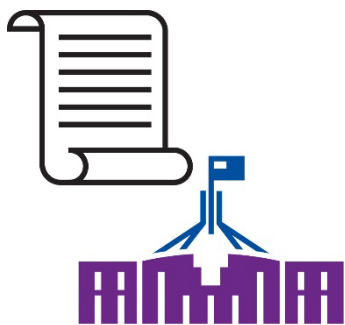
Ballot paper

Ballot papers are forms that you fill out to show how you want to vote.



Citizen

A citizen is someone who has the rights and freedoms of the country where they live.



Constitution

The Australian Constitution is a set of rules that are used to run Australia.



Electoral roll

A list of voters.



Enrol

When you enrol, we put your name on a list of voters.



Parliament

Parliament makes laws for Australia.

Australians have a say about who will be in Parliament.

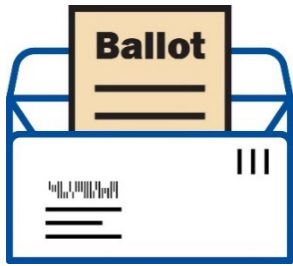


Polling place

A polling place is a building where people go to vote.

For example, a:

- school
- community centre.



Postal vote

You send us your vote in the mail.



Referendum

When you vote in a referendum, you help to decide if Australia should change the Constitution.



Vote

When you vote, you help to choose if the Australian people change the Constitution.



Voters

People who can vote.

More information



You can call us for more information.

13 23 26



You can visit our website.

www.aec.gov.au



You can find us on Facebook.

[/AusElectoralCom/](https://www.facebook.com/AusElectoralCom/)



You can find us on Twitter.

[@AusElectoralCom](https://twitter.com/AusElectoralCom)



You can find us on Instagram.

[@auselectoralcom](https://www.instagram.com/auselectoralcom)

National Relay Service



You can call the National Relay Service if you:

- are deaf or hard of hearing
- find it hard to speak using the phone.



TTY

133 677



Speak and Listen

1300 555 727



Ask these services to connect you to our phone number.

13 23 26

Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS)



If you speak a language other than English, you can call the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS).

131 450



Tell them what language you speak.



Ask them to connect you to our phone number.

13 23 26



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Quote job number 5247-B.

Authorised by the Electoral Commissioner, Canberra.