

The Federal Election is on 2 July 2016

It's almost time to VOTE

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## Voting sheet 1 – What is important to you?

Federal Elections are held every 3 years – this year's election will be on

**2 July 2016**

### Why should you vote?

In Australia we live in a **democracy**. Australian citizens choose who makes decisions about our country by voting. That means you too!

Everyone over the age of 18 years has to vote. Every vote is counted. It is your right to vote and it makes a difference to your life.

Your vote helps elect your local member of parliament and your local senator. If they get enough votes, the person you vote for will represent you in Parliament House.

### What is important to you?

Before you vote the first thing you need to do is work out what is important to you.

*For example:*

- Health
- Disability
- Employment / jobs
- Education



**Don't limit your imagination. There are many other issues.**

## Issues that are important to me and why:

- For example: Employment is important to me because I want to earn money and be involved in the community.
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Next you need to think about what you want done about these issues

## What I want done about my important issues:

- For example: I want the government to support people with disabilities to get good jobs by making work places accessible
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Different **political parties** and **candidates** have different plans about issues. These plans are called **policies**.

## Voting sheet 2 – Who can you vote for?

**The Federal Election is on 2 July 2016 – It is almost time to VOTE!**

### Who can you vote for?

You can vote for political parties and candidates in **your electorate**. Who you vote for is **your decision**.

1) First, you need to know which electorate you are in. You can check that here: <http://apps.aec.gov.au/esearch/> or by calling the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) on 13 23 26

**My electorate is:** For Example: Fenner

2) Next you need to find out who the candidates are in your electorate. You can find out here: [www.aec.gov.au/election/who-are-the-candidates](http://www.aec.gov.au/election/who-are-the-candidates)  
You can also find out by looking at:

- Your letterbox – they often send pamphlets
- The news on TV and radio
- The newspapers

There are candidates for the **House of Representatives** and the **Senate**. Together they make decisions about Australia.

**Candidates in my electorate:**




**House of Representatives Candidates:**

<b>Labor</b>	<b>Liberal</b>	<b>Greens</b>	<b>Other</b>
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**Senate Candidates:**

<b>Labor</b>	<b>Liberal</b>	<b>Greens</b>	<b>Other</b>
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**Federal Party Leaders:**

<p><b>Labor</b> Bill Shorten</p> 	<p><b>Liberal</b> Malcolm Turnbull</p> 	<p><b>Greens</b> Richard Di Natale</p> 	<b>Other</b>
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## Voting sheet 3 – Deciding who to vote for

Voting Sheet 3 helps you learn how to decide which candidates and political parties you might want to vote for.

### **Deciding who to vote for**

Once you know who your candidates are you need to find out about their plans on your important issues. These plans are called **policies**.

**What is the candidate's opinion on your important issue and what will they do about it?**

Here are some websites that might help:

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/federal-election-2016/guide/>

<http://www.aec.gov.au/>

You can also contact your candidates directly. They are there to answer your questions. You can call or email them.

Candidates may also visit your local shops or knock on your door. Take the opportunity to ask them your questions.

Make sure you have your issues and questions ready.

- What do the candidates say about your important issues?
- What will they do about it?
- Do you agree with their policies?

Issue	Question/What do you want to know?
For example: I care about employment for people with disabilities	For example: What will your party do to help people with disabilities get jobs?

**My important issue:**

For example: employment

<b>Political party or Candidate</b>	<b>Their policy</b>	<b>Do I agree? Yes/No</b>

Decide which candidate or political party you agree with

**Candidates and political parties that I agree with:**



## Voting sheet 4 – Go and vote

### Go and vote!

Go to your local **polling place** usually at your closest school or church. If you can't get there you can apply to vote by post or at this website:

<http://www.aec.gov.au/election/pva/>

Outside the polling place you might be given “how-to-vote” cards, telling you who to vote for. You **do not** have to do what they say. Your vote is **your decision**.

Inside, **polling officials** will take your name and give you **2 ballot papers**. You need to fill out both. You can ask a polling official for help.

Number **1** always means your **favourite** candidate or party.

Bigger numbers are for the candidates you like least.

If you make a mistake just ask the polling official for a new ballot paper.

**Follow the instructions otherwise your vote will not count.**

You can practice here:

[http://www.aec.gov.au/Voting/How\\_to\\_vote/practice/](http://www.aec.gov.au/Voting/How_to_vote/practice/)

## White is for the Senate

Senate: [http://www.aec.gov.au/Voting/How\\_to\\_vote/practice/practice-senate.htm](http://www.aec.gov.au/Voting/How_to_vote/practice/practice-senate.htm)

If you vote above the line, you must number at least six boxes from 1 to 6.

Place a 1 in the box above the party or group that is your first choice,  
Number 1 is your favourite.

The number 2 in the box above the party or group that is your second choice and so on until you have numbered at least six boxes above the line.

### Above the line

If you vote above the line, you must **number at least six boxes from 1 to 6.**

Place a 1 in the box above the party or group that is your first choice, the number 2 in the box above the party or group that is your second choice and so on until you have numbered at least six boxes above the line.

The image shows a sample ballot paper for the Senate election. It is titled 'Senate Ballot Paper State - Election of 6 Senators'. The ballot is divided into two main sections: 'Above the line' and 'Below the line'.  
**Above the line:** This section is for party voting. It features a horizontal line. Above this line are eight boxes, each containing a 'LOGO' and a 'PARTY' label. The boxes are numbered 1 through 6. Box 1 is the first choice, box 2 is the second choice, and so on. Box 4 is shown with the number '4' written in it. To the left of these boxes, there is a box with the number '5' written in it. To the right, there is a box with the number '4' written in it. A 'SAMPLE' watermark is visible in the bottom right corner of this section.  
**Below the line:** This section is for individual candidate voting. It is separated from the 'Above the line' section by a horizontal line. It consists of eight vertical columns. The first seven columns are labeled 'PARTY' and the eighth is labeled 'UNGROUPED'. Each column contains three boxes, each with a 'SURNAME Given Names PARTY' label. The boxes are empty, indicating where voters should write the names of their preferred candidates.  
**Instructions:** On the left side of the ballot, there are instructions: 'You may vote in one of two ways. Either Above the line: By numbering at least 6 of these boxes in the order of your choice (with number 1 as your first choice). Or Below the line: By numbering at least 12 of these boxes in the order of your choice (with number 1 as your first choice).'  
**Logos:** The logos in the 'Above the line' section are stylized representations of various political parties, including the Australian Labor Party (ALP), the Liberal Party, the Greens, and the Australian Democrats.

Sample ballot paper

**OR** Below the line If you vote below the line, you must number at least 12 boxes from 1 - 12.

Place a 1 in the box beside the candidate that is your first choice, Number **1** is your favourite.

Then the numbers 2, 3, 4 and so on to at least the number 12.

You can continue to place numbers in the order of your choice in as many boxes below the line as you like

**Below the line**

If you vote below the line, you must **number at least 12 boxes from 1 to 12.**

Place a 1 in the box beside the candidate that is your first choice, and the numbers 2, 3, 4 and so on to at least the number 12. You can continue to place numbers in the order of your choice in as many boxes below the line as you like.

**Or**

**Below the line**  
By numbering at least 12 of those boxes in the order of your choice (with number 1 as your first choice).

Sample ballot paper

## Green is for the House of Representatives

Number **every** candidate in order of YOUR favourite to least favourite.

Number **1** is your favourite.



Don't worry if you make a mistake. You can ask for another ballot paper and start again.

(Images supplied by <http://www.aec.gov.au/>)