

Civic and Democratic Participation

A group of young people holding 'London Voter Registration Week' banners

Key information

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Every Londoner's voice matters in London's civic and democratic life. This page contains important information and resources to support all Londoners take part in decisions and activity impacting them, their communities and our great city.

1. Register to vote

If you want to vote in an election or referendum, you must first register to vote. This is also called “being on the electoral register or roll” and has important implications on your credit score and ability to serve on a jury.

You must [register to vote online](#) – it takes less than five minutes!

You will be asked to provide your National Insurance number, your date of birth and your address. Don't worry if you do not have them – leave your contact details during the registration process and Electoral Services in your borough council will get in touch and ask you to send additional documents. If you have any questions, you can contact your local [Electoral Registration Office](#).

You only need to register once - you don't need to register separately for every election. But you must register again if you change address, name or nationality.

If you're a student, you may be able to register to vote at both your home address and your term-time address. [Find out more](#).

If you think your name and address being on the electoral register could affect your safety, or the safety of someone in your household, you can [register to vote anonymously](#).

Find out about other options for registering to vote, and what to do if you [don't have a fixed or permanent address](#).

There is always a deadline to register to vote – this is at least 12 working days before an election (or around 20 calendar days). If you don't register before the deadline, you won't be able to vote.

2. Who can register

You must be 16 or over to register to vote in London*. You must also be one of the following:

- a British citizen
- an Irish or EU citizen** living in London
- a Commonwealth citizen who has permission to enter or stay in the UK, or who does not need permission

The GLA has produced voter registration resources in over 20 community languages. You can find them on the [GLA's London Voter Registration Week hub](#).

The GLA has also produced separate [guidance on the democratic rights of Hong Kong Londoner](#).

*This guidance applies to democratic rights in England and, thus, in London. The devolved nations, such as Wales and Scotland, have separate arrangements.

** Due to the UK leaving the European Union, the voting rights of EU Londoners might change. Find the [latest Government guidance](#).

3. Which elections you can vote in

The elections you can vote in depend on your citizenship, your age and where you live in the UK.

If you are a Londoner who holds British, Irish or [qualifying Commonwealth citizenship](#), you can vote in all elections that take place.

If you are a Londoner who holds [EU citizenship](#) (other than the Republic of Ireland, Malta and Cyprus), you can vote in the [Mayor of London and London Assembly election](#) and in the [local government/ borough elections](#). You can't vote in UK Parliamentary/ general elections.

In England, and thus in London, you can vote when you turn 18.

Besides being a voter, you can also stand in elections as a candidate. Find more info on the [Your Vote Matters hub](#).

4. How to vote

You can vote in person on election day – before the election, your borough electoral services will send you a poll card containing information about the date of the election and your designated polling station.

You can apply to [vote by post](#) because you're away on holiday on election day or because your work schedule means you can't get to your polling station. Or you can choose to vote by post simply because it would be more convenient for you.

If you know that you won't be able to get to the polling station on polling day, you can ask someone you trust to cast your vote for you. This is called [voting by proxy](#).

Please note: The way we vote might change. Find the [latest Government guidance](#).

5. Civic and education resources

Being able to register and vote is not the only way Londoners can be heard and can make a difference in their local communities and London.

You can find other opportunities for taking part in civic life, including [volunteering](#), sharing your opinions with London City Hall on [Talk London](#), with the [London Assembly](#) or with your [Member of Parliament](#) and local councillor.

The GLA has also produced [Media and Political Literacy](#) resources that will help you better understand your rights and responsibility, organise activity in your community and help you get heard in London.

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