

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**

Youth Advisory Group



2025 FEDERAL ELECTION TOOLKIT

**A GUIDE FOR VOTERS AND
YOUNG AUSTRALIANS**

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Who are we?

Amnesty's Youth Advisory Group

Amnesty International is a global movement of more than 10 million people in over 150 countries and territories who campaign to end human rights abuses. Amnesty works closely with Indigenous communities to fight discrimination, unfair detention and to demand safety and a fair justice system for all.

The Youth Advisory Group 2023-2025 is a team of youth activist leaders who are committed to improving the participation of young people in our movement and working to develop new and inclusive approaches to activism for young people at AIA. Check out our latest human rights education resources, listen to YAG's Anytime Amnesty Podcast (found on Spotify), or check out our resources for youth!

Voices of Influence Australia

Voices of Influence Australia are a youth-led non-profit organisation that functions to inform and encourage the masses who are passive, individual consciences into being active, collective voices for human rights. They are a registered charity.

Humanity Bites

Run primarily on Instagram as [@humanity_bites](#), this is a safe place to learn about all things law, politics and history in bite sized pieces, run by [@erinmayh](#) 🌟



As a collective, we acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the Lands of which we live and work, and pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging. We express our gratitude that we can share what is, and always will be, Aboriginal land. We aspire that in the spirit of reconciliation we can move forward together to a place of justice, healing and partnership.





Why Should You Care About the 2025 Australian Federal Election?



A lot of people are feeling pretty over politics right now. It's no secret that many Australians- especially young voters- are frustrated and disillusioned. There's this feeling that politicians don't listen, that voting doesn't actually change anything, and that no matter what, things stay the same. On top of that, seeing what has happened in elections overseas, with rising political division, misinformation, and leaders who don't seem to represent everyday people, has left many wondering: What's the point of voting?

We get it. But here's the thing- elections are decided by the people who show up. If young people and first-time voters stay home because they are frustrated with the system, the only voices that will shape the future are those who do turn up. And often, they're not the ones pushing for things like climate action, affordable housing, or better mental health support.

The truth is, voting is one of the easiest and most powerful ways to make your voice heard. Governments pay attention to the people who vote because those are the people who decide whether they stay in power. The more young people and underrepresented communities engage, the harder it is for politicians to ignore their priorities.

Change doesn't happen overnight, and voting isn't the only way to create change—but it's an important step. If we want a future that reflects our values—whether that's a stronger stance on human rights, action on climate change, better access to education, or making everyday life more affordable—we need to use the tools we have. Voting is one of them.

So, if you're feeling fed up with politics, **you're not alone.**


But instead of tuning out, let's make our voices impossible to ignore. Even if the system isn't perfect, our votes still matter. If we show up, we shape the future. If we don't, others will do it for us.

Now young people are more important than ever- the 2025 Federal election will be the first federal election where Gen Z and Millennials outnumber Baby Boomers at the ballot box in every state and territory!

What Do Young Australians Care About?

As we head into the 2025 federal election, it's important to highlight the issues that matter most to young Australians. [The 2024 Youth Representative Report by United Nations Youth Australia](#)—based on insights from over 2,000 young people—spotlights four key priorities where youth are seeking serious change:

Accessible Education




Young Australians are demanding fair and inclusive access to quality education. They're concerned about rising university fees, the availability of vocational training, and ensuring learning environments are inclusive and supportive for everyone. Making sure education is affordable and accessible to all, regardless of financial background or learning needs, is a top priority.

Cost of Living and Financial Security

Financial stress is a major concern. More than half of young Australians (56%) named the cost of living as their number one issue. Many are struggling with job insecurity, underemployment, and the rising cost of daily essentials. Young people are also increasingly worried about whether they'll be able to achieve financial independence and long-term security.



Mental Health and Wellbeing



Anxiety, depression, and other mental health challenges are widespread among young people. Stress from school, financial pressure, and uncertainty about the future all contribute to declining mental wellbeing. There is a clear call for better funding and access to mental health services—especially those that are youth-friendly and culturally safe.

Climate Change

Climate and environmental issues continue to be top of mind for young voters. They are pushing for serious action to combat climate change, including a rapid transition to renewable energy and strong protections for natural ecosystems. Young people see climate action not just as policy, but as a necessity for future generations.



Perspectives From Marginalised Groups

It's also critical to centre the experiences of marginalised youth. For example:

Young people with disabilities have emphasised the need for inclusive education systems and mental health services that are accessible. A joint statement by leading youth mental health organizations, note that two in five young Australians experience mental health issues, with cost being a significant barrier to accessing support.

Young refugees and asylum seekers report facing significant barriers to accessing education and employment, which deepens their financial and social vulnerability.

Raise Our Voice Australia is encouraging the amplification of concerns from young women and gender-diverse individuals aged 13-17, who are currently unable to vote. Have your voice heard through their 2025 Forfeit Campaign.

The 'Make It 16' campaign, led by young Australians, also advocates for reducing the voting age to 16, aiming to increase youth participation and ensure their voices are represented in policymaking.

Bridget Cama and Allira Davis, co-chairs of the Uluru Youth Network, emphasize the need to address misinformation that affected the 2023 Indigenous Voice referendum. They advocate for truthful education on Indigenous affairs to prevent deceptive tactics in the upcoming election, and the mandate of the Uluru Statement for Voice, Treaty and Truth.

Run For It are a powerful movement of young people supporting other under 35's who are leads in their communities to get elected to local councils across Australia. Younger age groups are significantly underrepresented at all levels of Government!





Shared Priorities Across Generations

Many of the issues raised by young Australians reflect broader national concerns shared across generations. These include:

1. **Housing Affordability**

Why it matters: Rising rental and home ownership costs affect everyone

The facts:



-  Housing prices outpacing income
-  Western Sydney residents among the hardest hit



2. **Economic Stability**

Why it matters: Australians are facing job insecurity and a cost-of-living crisis



The facts:

-  Inflation and stagnant wages impacting daily life
-  Global uncertainty driving domestic pressures

3. **Healthcare Access**

Why it matters: People in both metro and rural areas need timely, affordable care



The facts:

-  Hospital upgrades promised in key electorates
-  Regional communities facing severe GP shortages

4. **Climate Change & Environment**

Why it matters: Extreme weather events are impacting homes, health and livelihoods



The facts:

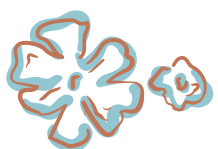
-  2023–24 bushfires raised urgency on climate policy
-  Majority of Australians support renewable transition

5. **Education & Skills Development**

Why it matters: Future-proofing jobs and supporting retraining across all ages

The facts:

-  HECS debt and upskilling gaps growing
-  Experts warn productivity will decline without investment



How to Enrol or Update Your Details



Australian Federal Election – **Saturday, 3 May 2025**

✓ 1. Check if You're Enrolled

aec.gov.au/check

You'll need:

Full name

Address

Date of birth

17 Deadline: 8:00 PM (local time), Monday 7 April 2025

2. Enrol to Vote

You can enrol if you:

Are an Australian citizen

Are 16+ (you can enrol now and vote when you turn 18)

Haven't enrolled before

Enrol online:

aec.gov.au/enrol

17 Deadline: 8:00 PM, Monday 7 April 2025

3. Update Your Details

Update if you:

Moved to a new address

Changed your name

Need to change postal voting details

Same link:

aec.gov.au/enrol

17 Deadline: 8:00 PM, Monday 7 April 2025

4. Key Election Dates

Close of Rolls: 8:00 PM, Monday 7 April 2025 – Last chance to enrol or update!

Postal Vote Applications Close: 6:00 PM, Wednesday 30 April 2025

Early Voting Opens: Tuesday, 22 April 2025

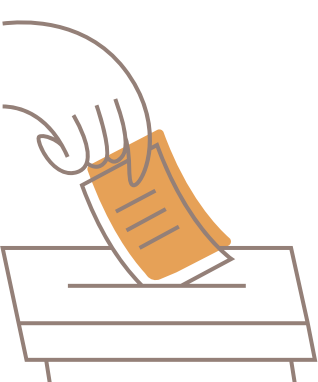
17 Election Day: Saturday, 3 May 2025

8:00 AM – 6:00 PM local time

5. Need Help?

Call: 13 23 26

Website: aec.gov.au





Voting 101: Finding Your Polling Place & What to Expect

Finding Your Local Polling Place


✓ Visit: aec.gov.au

 Click: "Where can I vote?"


 Enter your address/suburb


 You'll see:
Polling place addresses
Opening hours
Accessibility info 
Available facilities (e.g., parking, ramp access)

Early Voting vs. Election Day

 Election Day:
Saturday, 3 May 2025
8:00 AM – 6:00 PM

 Anyone still in line at 6 PM can vote


 Early Voting:
✓ Available if you meet eligibility criteria

 Early voting centres open from 22 April 2025

 Locations in every electoral division

Official Election Materials

 You'll receive a voter guide in the mail with:

 Your electoral division (seat)

 Where and when to vote

 What to do if you can't vote on the day


 AEC contact info

 Translated into 34 languages!

Community Resources





 Local councils, libraries & community centres share AEC info

 Need help? Call 13 23 26

 Try the AEC's interactive ballot tool online to practice voting!

Can't Attend on Election Day?

Postal Vote




-  Apply online at aec.gov.au
-  Closes 6 PM, Wednesday 30 April 2025
-  A witness must sign your declaration (but not see your vote)
-  Return your postal vote by 16 May 2025 (13 days post-election)

Absent or Interstate Voting

- Vote at any polling place in your state/territory
- Your ballot will still count in your home division
- Interstate? Use designated interstate voting centres

Mobile Voting

Offered in:

-  Remote & Indigenous communities
-  Aged care homes, hospitals, mental health facilities
-  Prisons (for eligible voters)

What Do I Need to Bring?


 No ID required!

AEC staff will ask:



1. Your full name
2. Your enrolment address
3. If you've already voted in this election

 If your name is on the roll, you're good to vote!

What If I Miss Voting?


 AEC will send a letter if they think you didn't vote

 You have 28 days to:

-  Explain why you didn't vote or
-  Pay the \$20 fine

 Still unpaid or no valid reason?

➡ It may go to court, with further penalties possible

 **Pro tip:** Voting is both a right and a legal duty.
Make your voice count — and avoid a fine! 🙌

Accessibility and Voting Support

Accessible Voting Options

Making voting easier for people with disability or carer responsibilities

Postal Voting

If getting to a polling place is difficult, you can apply for a general postal vote.

- ✓ Ballot papers are sent to you
- ✓ You can get help filling them in — but you must sign or mark them yourself

You may be eligible if you:

Are in hospital, a care facility, or too unwell to travel

Can't sign your name

Are a full-time carer

Have a disability that limits your movement

👉 Apply at aec.gov.au

Help at the Polling Place

Need assistance while voting in person? You can:

Bring a friend or family member to help

Ask a staff member to help complete, fold, or place your vote in the box

Stay in your car — staff may bring the ballot paper to you if needed

Mobile Voting

The AEC runs mobile voting teams for:

Nursing homes and care facilities

Homeless shelters

Remote or regional communities

If You're Deaf or Hard of Hearing

☎ Call the National Relay Service on 1300 555 727

They'll help you contact the AEC or get information you need

Need Language Support?

The AEC has translated resources in First Nations and many international languages

🌐 Find them here - https://www.aec.gov.au/about_aec/translated_information/

Mistake on Your Ballot?

📄 Not a problem — just ask staff for a new one

⚠ Once it's in the ballot box, you can't change it

Preferential Voting Explained

Australia uses a preferential voting system for both the House of Representatives and the Senate. It's designed to make sure elected candidates have broad support—even if they weren't your first choice.

In Australia, people in the House of Representatives (HOR) each speak for a local area called an electorate—kind of like your neighbourhood on a bigger scale. Senators, on the other hand, represent their whole state or territory, making sure everyone across the state has a voice in Parliament.

House of Representatives (Lower House) 🏛️

How it works:

- Number the candidates in order of preference: 1 for your favourite, 2 for your next, and so on.
- If a candidate gets more than 50% of the first-preference votes, they win.
- If no one does, the candidate with the least votes is eliminated, and their votes are redistributed to the next preference listed on each ballot.
- This process continues until someone gets a majority.

Why it matters: Even if your top choice isn't elected, your vote can still help decide the winner. Your preferences carry weight!

Senate (Upper House) 🏛️

How it works:

- You can vote above the line (number at least 6 parties) or below the line (number at least 12 individual candidates).
- Multiple candidates are elected per state based on proportional representation.
- Candidates must meet a quota of votes to be elected. Surplus votes are redistributed based on preferences.



What Does Each Level of Government Do?

Knowing who does what can help you understand how your vote influences the decisions that affect your life.

The Federal Government (Parliament)

Australia's Parliament is made up of two houses:

- The House of Representatives (Lower House)
- The Senate (Upper House)

Together, they pass laws, control national spending (including things like education, health, and defence), and debate key issues.

The House of Representatives

- Made up of MPs elected from local electorates.
- The party (or coalition) with 76 seats or more forms the government.
- The leader of that party becomes the Prime Minister.
- They introduce and vote on laws, budgets, and policies that affect daily life (like Medicare, Centrelink, housing programs, etc).

What if no party wins a majority? (Hung Parliament)

If no single party wins more than half the seats (76) in the House of Representatives, it's called a hung parliament. To form government, a party must gain the support of minor parties or independents—usually by securing their vote of confidence and support for supply (approval of the budget).

This means that minor parties and independents can hold real power, influencing key policies and decisions in exchange for their support.

Why it matters:

Your vote for a minor party or independent still counts—it can shape who forms government and what deals are made to get there.



- Reviews and amends laws passed by the House of Reps.
- Holds the government accountable through committees and inquiries.
- Made up of 76 Senators (12 from each state and 2 from each territory).
- Plays a big role in shaping, blocking, or improving legislation.

What Happens After You Vote?

Voting isn't just about picking a Prime Minister. Australia's Parliament has two houses: the House of Representatives and the Senate. The Senate, where minor parties and independents often hold the balance of power, plays a crucial role in shaping laws and holding the government to account.

Enter: Committees.

Senate and House committees dig into the details of proposed laws, government spending, and big national issues. They can call for public submissions, hold hearings, and make recommendations. Some key things to know:

- **Standing Committees** – These are permanent and cover ongoing topics like health, education, the environment, or foreign affairs.
- **Select Committees** – These are temporary, created to investigate a specific issue (e.g. COVID-19 response, cost of living, youth mental health).
- **Joint Committees** – These include members from both the House of Representatives and the Senate. They work together on issues like human rights, intelligence, or national integrity.

Why it matters:

These committees shape the details of laws and expose what's really going on in government. Many major reforms and inquiries (like the Robodebt Royal Commission) began as committee investigations. They're also a key space where minor parties and independents can have real influence.

Who Makes the Rules? Who Does What?

Before diving into policies, it helps to know what the federal government actually controls—and what's up to states and territories. Some issues (like immigration or Defence) are national, while others (like schools and hospitals) are shared or mostly state-based. There's also a global layer, where international agreements and organisations influence what Australia does.

Here's a simple breakdown:

Federal Government

Responsible for national laws and programs, including:

Immigration and refugee policy

Centrelink and income support (e.g. JobSeeker, Youth Allowance)

Defence, foreign affairs, and trade

Environmental legislation at the national level

Medicare and national health funding

HECS/HELP and university policy

Marriage equality and anti-discrimination laws

Funding for major infrastructure, aged care, and NDIS

State and Territory Governments

Manage and fund many services you use every day:

Public hospitals and healthcare services

School education and TAFE systems


Police, prisons, and criminal law

Public transport and roads

Rental laws and housing support

Birth certificates, name changes, and state-based ID documents

Mental health and youth justice programs

 **Why it matters:** Sometimes federal parties promise things that rely on cooperation with states—or won't fully happen unless state governments also get on board. That's why federal election promises may take time or negotiation to roll out.

International Governance

Australia is part of global organisations like the United Nations, the World Trade Organization, and climate treaties like the Paris Agreement. These influence:

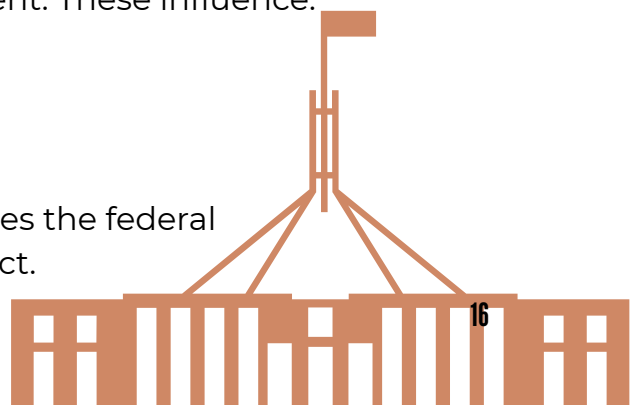
Human rights laws and refugee protections

Climate goals and environmental targets

Trade, global health, and international aid

Military alliances (e.g. AUKUS with the US and UK)

Australia's international commitments shape what policies the federal government puts in place—or what pressure it faces to act.



How to Fact-Check Policies & Candidates (Avoiding misinformation)


With so much information (and misinformation) flying around during an election, it can be hard to figure out what's real and what's just political spin.

Every party and candidate is trying to sell you their best version of themselves—but that doesn't mean everything they say is true or that they'll follow through.

If you want to fact-check candidates, compare policies, and make sure you're getting accurate info before you vote, here's where to look:

1 See How Your MP & Senators Have Voted

Want to know if your local MP or a party actually follows through on what they say? Check out [They Vote For You](#)—a site that tracks how politicians have voted on key issues in Parliament.

 **How it works:** Just type in a politician's name, and you'll see whether they've supported or opposed things like climate action, refugee rights, education funding, Indigenous justice, and more. This way, you can compare their actual voting record with what they're promising in their campaign.

But 

A grain of salt:

- Many of the “policy” categories haven't been updated in years, so some issues are missing or outdated.
- The site relies on community-submitted interpretations of votes and bills—so it reflects how people have analysed the motions, not necessarily the full context of the vote or debate.
- It shows how someone voted, but not why—MPs might vote against a bill for complex reasons (e.g. lack of amendments, funding concerns, or party lines).

Also important:

In Australia, most MPs vote in line with their party, not as individuals. This is called party discipline.

They usually only vote freely—based on their personal views—if it's a conscience vote (like on marriage equality or euthanasia in the past).

What it means for you:

It's still a great tool to check out how your reps vote—but best used alongside other sources like party platforms, media analysis, and committee reports.

2 Compare Party Policies

Closer to election day, independent tools like [ABC Vote Compass](#) will let you compare your views with different political parties.

💡 **How it works:** You answer questions about key issues, and Vote Compass matches your views to party policies, helping you see which parties align most with what you care about.

These programs break down politics in an accessible way—whether through debate, investigations, or fact-checking. If you want to see politicians held accountable, catch them being questioned live, or just stay informed without the spin, these resources are a great place to start! 🚀:

📺 TV Shows & Programs

- Q+A (ABC) – A live panel discussion where politicians, experts, and everyday Australians debate current issues. Audiences can ask questions and challenge politicians directly. Watch it on ABC TV or stream on ABC iView.
- Four Corners (ABC) – Australia’s longest-running investigative journalism program, exposing political scandals, corruption, and major policy failures. Great for deep dives into important issues. Available on ABC iView.
- Media Watch (ABC) – A short, sharp weekly show that calls out misinformation, bias, and misleading reporting in Australian media—including political spin. A must-watch to understand how news can be manipulated.

📻 Radio & Podcasts

- The Party Room (ABC Podcasts) – Hosted by political journalists Fran Kelly and Patricia Karvelas, this podcast breaks down major political events, policies, and election news in an easy-to-understand way.
- Democracy Sausage (ANU) – A smart but easy-to-follow podcast discussing how politics affects everyday Australians.



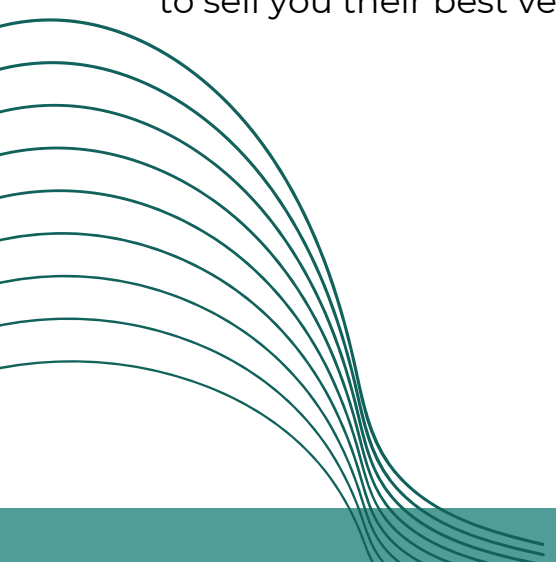


Websites & Forums

- The Guardian Australia – Politics Live – Provides real-time updates and analysis on what’s happening in Parliament. Great for staying up to date.
- ABC News Politics Section – Covers political developments, interviews, and in-depth policy analysis.
- The Conversation – Articles by academics explaining political decisions, policies, and their real-world impact.
- Cheek Media (youth-focused, independent political analysis with a progressive lens)
- The Daily Aus- An Australian social media-based news outlet, with explainers on their Instagram, a newsletter, and a ‘Politics’ section.

3 Read Party Platforms (But Watch for Spin)

Most parties and candidates post their policies, election promises, and big plans on their websites and campaign materials. These can be useful to see what they claim they’ll do if elected, but remember—they’re trying to sell you their best version of themselves.



🔍 Here's how to fact-check their past actions vs. current promises:

✓ They Vote For You – See how they actually voted on key issues, not just what they say now.

✓ Check independent news sources – Some reliable, fact-based sources include:

- ABC News (public broadcaster, no ads, fact-checked)
- SBS News (good for diverse perspectives)
- The Guardian Australia (progressive-leaning but strong on policy analysis)
- The Conversation (academic experts explaining policy impacts) ✓ Look at their record in government – If a party or candidate has been in power before, check what they actually did, not just what they said.
- Crikey Fact Check (independent Australian news source)

💡 Bottom line: If a politician suddenly claims to care about an issue they've never supported before, it's worth checking if they really mean it or if it's just a campaign tactic. 🚩

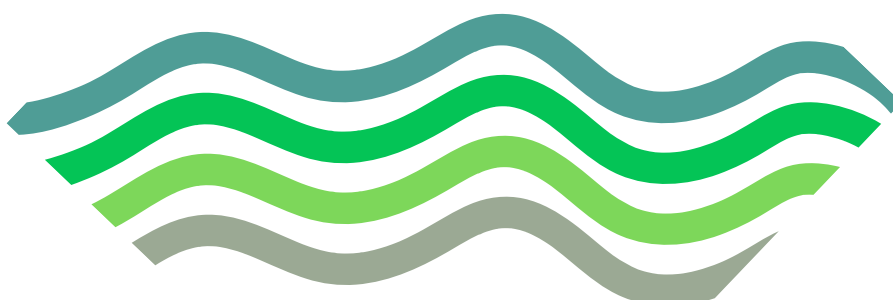
4 Spot Misinformation & Fake News

🚩 Watch out for misleading election ads, dodgy social media posts, and conspiracy theories. Political misinformation spreads fast, especially online, so be skeptical before believing or sharing.

✓ Check official sources like the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) for factual election info.

✓ Cross-check with multiple news outlets—if only one outlet is reporting something, it might not be accurate.

✓ Use fact-checking sites like ABC News Verify to debunk false claims.



💡 **Warning signs of misinformation:**

- Sensational headlines ("BREAKING: This SHOCKING election scandal will change everything!")
- Unverified sources (anonymous claims, random social media pages)
- Highly emotional content (designed to make you angry or scared)
- Out-of-context quotes (clips edited to make politicians look bad without full context)

Other Fact-checking resources:

Ensuring the information you encounter during the election period is accurate is crucial. Here are some reputable fact-checking resources to help you verify claims and avoid misinformation:

Australian Fact-Checking Sites:

- AAP FactCheck: Operated by the Australian Associated Press, this service examines the truthfulness of statements made by public figures and viral social media content. aap.com.au
- ABC Fact Check: A collaboration between RMIT University and the Australian Broadcasting Corporation, this platform assesses the accuracy of claims made in public debate. abc.net.au
- The Conversation FactCheck: An independent source where academic experts analyse and verify claims related to Australian issues. latrobe.libguides.com





International Fact-Checking Sites:

- FactCheck.org: A U.S.-based nonprofit that monitors the factual accuracy of statements by political figures and others in the public sphere.
- PolitiFact: An American fact-checking website that rates the accuracy of claims made by elected officials and others on its Truth-O-Meter.
- Full Fact: A UK-based independent charity that fact-checks claims made by politicians, public institutions, and the media.
- Snopes: One of the oldest fact-checking websites, Snopes investigates a wide range of topics, including urban legends, rumors, and misinformation.

5 Think Before You Share

If something seems outrageous, shocking, or “too good to be true”, double-check it before sharing.

- ✓ Look up the claim on multiple news sites.
- ✓ Check if fact-checking sites have already debunked it.
- ✓ Ask yourself: Who benefits from me believing this?

💡 Remember: False or misleading election content spreads fast, and once it's out there, it's hard to undo.
Don't help misinformation go viral.

💡 The Bottom Line?

- ✓ Do your research.
- ✓ Check voting records.
- ✓ Compare policies.
- ✓ Don't believe everything you see on social media.

An informed vote is a powerful vote—and in 2025, your voice matters more than ever. 🗳️

Myths vs Facts About Voting (Common misconceptions)

Overview

With so many misconceptions around voting, it's easy to get confused about your rights and responsibilities. Voting in Australia is compulsory, but many myths circulate, especially during election times. Let's clear up some of these common misconceptions so you can make an informed decision at the ballot box.

Myths	Facts
✗ You don't have to vote in Australia.	<p>✓ Voting is compulsory for all Australian citizens aged 18 and over</p> <p>💡 Tip: Registering to vote is easy. You can do it online or at any Australia Post outlet</p> <p>Learn more: Enrol to vote - Australian Electoral Commission</p>
✗ You can be fined for spoiling your ballot paper.	<p>✓ You won't be fined for spoiling your ballot paper, but your vote won't be counted.</p> <p>Learn more: Ballot paper formality guidelines</p>
✗ You have to vote for the major parties.	<p>✓ You can vote for any party, and it's common for people to vote for smaller or independent parties too.</p> <p>Learn more: Preferential voting - Australian Electoral Commission</p>
✗ You can't vote if you're away on election day.	<p>✓ If you can't vote on election day, you can vote early or apply for a postal vote</p> <p>Learn more: Voting options - Australian Electoral Commission</p>



Myths	Facts
<p>✗ You can't vote if you're not on the electoral roll.</p>	<p>✓ You must be on the electoral roll to vote, but you can still enroll up to 8pm on election day.</p> <p>Learn more: Managing the Commonwealth electoral roll</p>
<p>✗ You can only vote for one party or candidate.</p>	<p>✓ You can vote for multiple parties or candidates, ranking them in order of preference.</p> <p>Learn more: https://www.aec.gov.au/learn/preferential-voting.htm</p>
<p>✗ Voting doesn't matter; politicians don't listen.</p>	<p>✓ Every vote counts, and your vote contributes to the democratic process, influencing outcomes.</p> <p>Learn more: Democracy Rules - AEC for schools</p>
<p>✗ Only Australian citizens who speak English can vote.</p>	<p>✓ As long as you are an Australian citizen aged 18 or over, you can vote regardless of your language skills.</p> <p>Learn more: Translated and accessible information - Australian Electoral Commission</p>

Check How Your Representatives Voted



Humanity Bites is an independent creator making easily accessible resources about all things politics, international law and history ♥

Check out their resource on voting [here](#) to see how your values align with the different parties, instructions on how to fill out the ballots, and more!

From creator Erin Hight:

It's easy to get caught up in election promises, but the real question is: do your representatives actually vote for what they claim to support?

Politicians love to talk big during campaigns—climate action, housing affordability, healthcare reforms—but once they're in office, their voting records tell the real story. If a candidate says they support LGBTQIA+ rights but has voted against marriage equality or trans healthcare, their promises mean nothing. If they claim to care about cost-of-living relief but consistently back policies that benefit corporations over everyday people, that's a red flag.

That's why it's crucial to check how your representatives vote, not just what they say. Our spreadsheet breaks it down issue by issue, showing whether key politicians have actually supported policies that align with their promises.

Before you vote, take a minute to do your research. Look at their voting history, not just their election campaigns. Because at the end of the day, actions speak louder than words.

How to Vote with Human Rights in Mind

From Amnesty International Australia

Amnesty International Australia has produced a Human Rights Agenda for the next Australian Government and Parliament. In 2025, Australians will elect their next government. Elections are a critical opportunity to shape our nation's future. What kind of country do we want Australia to be? Who should represent us? What values should guide our leaders?

The world has entered an era of profound uncertainty. The re-election of US President Donald Trump has sent shockwaves through the global human rights community, as his administration moves at breath-taking speed to dismantle hard-won protections and embolden authoritarian regimes. With his attacks on fundamental freedoms escalating, the need for unwavering leadership in defending human rights has never been more urgent.

Australia cannot afford to stand by. Our leaders must reject this dangerous rollback of rights and instead champion justice, equality, and human dignity - both at home and abroad.

Australia has a choice: to remain complicit in this regression or to step up as a force for justice, fairness, and human dignity. We call on the next Australian Government and Parliament to place human rights at the heart of all policy decisions. We must restore Australia's standing as a global human rights leader, advocating for international law and human dignity in the face of rising authoritarianism.




Where to Next?

You have power—and your voice matters.

Voting is one step. But change comes from conversations, community, and courage. Whether it's climate justice, equality, mental health, or housing—young people like you are already shaping the future.

Messages of Hope

 Change starts with ordinary people doing extraordinary things together.

 Your story is powerful—and political.

 You don't need to know everything to speak up. Just start.

Get Involved

Before the Election

Share this guide and start a convo with friends

Ask candidates about youth priorities

Enrol to vote: www.aec.gov.au

After the Election

Join a youth-led campaign or org




Host a community event or voter info night

Speak at your school, uni, or local forum

Keep showing up, even when change feels slow

Connect With These Youth-Led Changemakers

 **Amnesty International Australia Youth Advisory Group**  amnesty.org.au |  [@amnestyaustralia](https://twitter.com/amnestyaustralia)

 **Voices of Influence**  voicesofinfluence.org.au |  [@voicesofinfluence](https://twitter.com/voicesofinfluence)

 **Humanity Bites**  humanitybitesproject@gmail.com |  [@humanitybites](https://twitter.com/humanitybites)

More Youth-Focused Groups to Follow & Join

Raise Our Voices Australia – Empowering young women and gender-diverse people in politics and media

Missing Perspectives – Rewriting the news through a feminist, global youth lens

Young Diplomats Society – Engaging youth in foreign policy and international affairs

Foundation for Young Australians (FYA) – Leadership and systems change

AYCC (Aust. Youth Climate Coalition) – Youth-led climate action

YACVic / Y NSW / YACWA – State-based youth advocacy organisations

Democracy in Colour – Racial justice by and for people of colour

Run for It – Helping young people run for public office

Think Forward – Fighting for economic justice and fairness for young Australians

Australian Youth Affairs Coalition (AYAC) – National voice for young people and the youth sector

FINAL WORDS

 **You don't have to do everything, but you can do something.**

 **You are not just the future — you are the now.**

 **Let's build a future that reflects us all.**

