

How to complete your federal and state election ballot papers.



To make your vote count correctly, you need to complete two ballot papers, one for each house of parliament.

The Australian (Federal) and Western Australian (State) parliaments are made up of two parts called *houses*. The lower house is where most laws are made or amended, and the upper house both makes and reviews laws.

The two houses work together to pass the laws that govern us.

Our democracy works best when we all participate in the process. Learn how to correctly complete your ballot papers for each house to ensure your vote is counted.

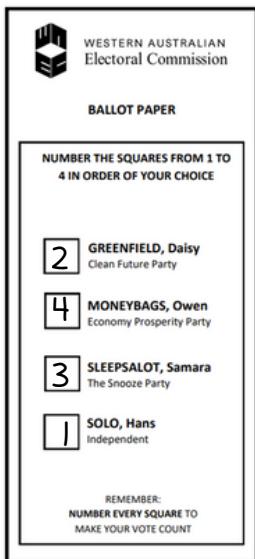
Preferential voting

Both State and Federal elections use **preferential** voting. This means you number the candidates in order of your preference: 1 for your first choice, 2 for your second choice and so on.

The small ballot paper is for the lower house

The lower house ballot paper is for selecting a representative for the electoral area or **electorate** where you live.

For the small ballot paper, you must **number every square**.



Lower House ballot paper example

For the large ballot paper, you must choose either **above the line** or **below the line—not both**.

Be sure to read and follow the instructions on the ballot paper.

The large ballot paper is for the upper house

Upper house voting is more complex because you are selecting multiple representatives for a large electorate. In Western Australia, this means the entire state.

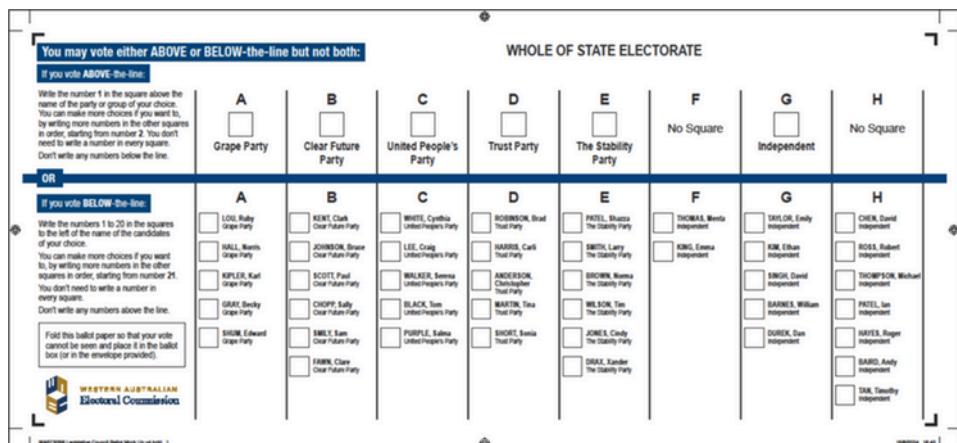
To help voters express their preferences, the ballot paper is divided into two sections by a horizontal line. You must choose to vote either above the line or below the line. **Not both**.

Above the Line Voting

- The top section of the ballot paper lists political parties horizontally.
- To vote above the line, write a '1' in the square above the name of your preferred party or group.
- You may continue numbering other parties, but you don't need to number every square. In a federal election you must number at least 6 squares.

Below the Line Voting

- The bottom section lists individual candidates vertically under each party name.
- If you want to choose specific candidates, you must number at least 1 to 20 in order of your preference.
- You can continue numbering beyond 20 if you like but you don't need to number every square. In a federal election you must number at least 12 squares.



Upper House ballot paper example

Voting is important. It makes you part of choosing your government. Completing your ballot papers correctly ensures your vote counts.

