

# Lawyers

**Lawyer** is a general term for a person who is qualified to advise people about the law, to prepare legal documents for them and/or to represent them in a court of law.

In England and Wales, a **lawyer** who is qualified to speak in the higher courts of law is called a **barrister**.

In Scotland a **barrister** is called an **advocate**.

In *North American English* **attorney** is a more formal word used for a **lawyer** and is used especially in job titles: *district attorney*.

**Counsel** is the formal legal word used for a lawyer who is representing someone in court: *counsel for the prosecution*.

**Solicitor** is the *British English* term for a lawyer who gives legal advice and prepares documents, for example when you are buying a house, and sometimes has the right to speak in a court of law.

In *North American English* **solicitor** is only used in the titles of some lawyers who work for the government: *Solicitor General*.

**Advocate** is a person who defends somebody in court.

A **civil attorney** or **civil lawyer**, commonly known as a **litigator**, is a lawyer hired by a client to pursue or defend a civil lawsuit in a court of law.

A **criminal attorney** or **criminal defense lawyer** is a popular term for an attorney who specializes in defending people charged with crimes.