

# Learning for Earning

Your Route to Success

Sixth Edition



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*PowerPoint Presentations for*

# Learning for Earning

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**CHAPTER**

**31**

**Being a  
Responsible Citizen**



# Chapter Objectives

After studying this chapter, you will be able to

- recognize the importance of voting in elections.
- explain how laws are made.
- name the two categories of laws in the United States.
- determine situations that might require the services of a lawyer.
- state the rights and responsibilities of consumers.



# Key Terms

- citizen
- register
- bill
- civil laws
- public laws
- monopoly
- competition
- recourse

# Being an Active Citizen

- You have many rights and responsibilities as a U.S. citizen.
- ***Citizen*** – A person who owes allegiance to a government.





# The Right to Vote

- Voting is one of the most important rights.
- Voting is a right for U.S. citizens at least 18 years old.
- Voting is a way to express yourself on national, state, and local issues.
- The people who are elected to office make and enforce the laws that affect your life.



# Did You Know?

- ❖ *Before 1920, women did not have the right to vote in the United States.*
- ❖ *Before 1971, only U.S. citizens who were at least 21 years old were allowed to vote.*

Source: [www.archives.gov/national\\_archives\\_experience/charters/constitution.html](http://www.archives.gov/national_archives_experience/charters/constitution.html)



# The Right to Vote

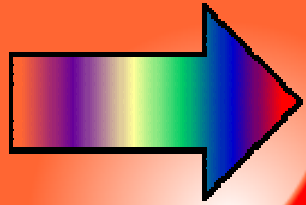
- All 18-year-olds who are U.S. citizens may register to vote.
- ***Register*** – To submit one's name to the official list of citizens eligible to vote in elections.
- You must have lived in the state and county where you are registering for a certain period, usually 30 days, prior to an election.



# The Right to Vote



- You can register to vote at the office of the
  - county commissioner
  - election supervisor
  - municipal clerk



# In Your Opinion

- ❖ *How would you respond to statements from Hank, an 18-year-old who tells you:*

"I'm not going to register to vote because my vote doesn't really count, and I don't know anything about any of the candidates."

# The Laws of the Land

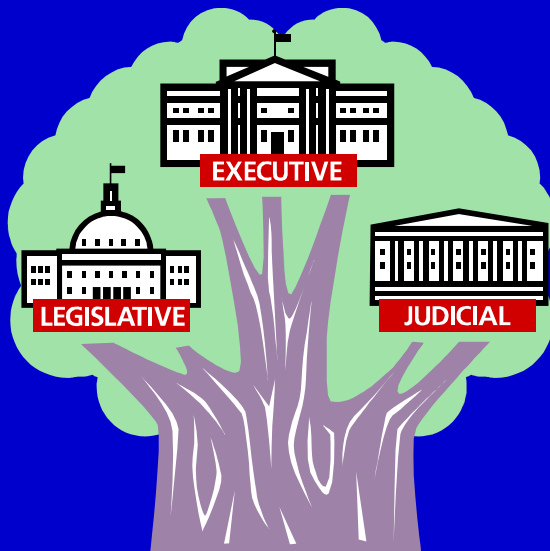
- Laws are rules by which people live.
- As a citizen, you have many rights protected by laws that state the course of action to take to correct situations.
- As a citizen, you have a responsibility to obey laws.

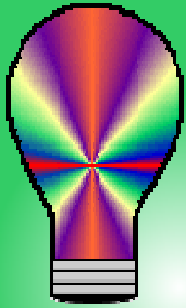
# How Laws Are Made

- Lawmakers thoroughly debate an issue before creating a bill or a proposition.
- **Bill** – A proposed law.
- A *proposition* is a public question appearing on voting ballots for the consideration of voters.
- A proposition becomes law if it is approved by the voters in an election.

# How Laws Are Made

- Most laws are formed by legislative bodies and signed into law by the person heading the executive branch, which is
  - the President (federal level)
  - a governor (state level)
  - a city or town mayor or council president (local level)





# Think About It

- Those you vote into office make and enforce the laws that affect your life.
- ❖ *In what other ways are you able to influence a new law proposed for your town? your state? the nation?*



# Types of Laws

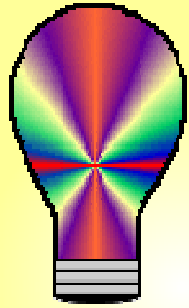
- There are two types of laws: civil and public.
- ***Civil laws*** – Laws that define a person's rights in relation to other people.
- Civil laws relate to such matters as
  - contracts
  - inheritances
  - the business of corporations



# Types of Laws

- ***Public laws*** – Laws that define a person's rights in relation to government.
  - *Criminal law* – Relates to punishments for failure to obey the law
  - *Constitutional law* – the basic laws of the nation
  - *Administrative law* – duties and powers of the executive branch of government
  - *International law* – Relates to the relationships among nations





# Think About It

- ❖ *Suppose two homeowners go to court to resolve a dispute over the location of a property line.*
- ❖ *What type of law governs this kind of dispute?*
  - ❖ *Civil law*





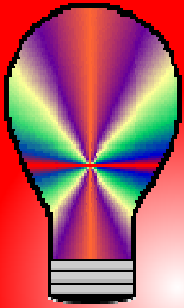
# When You May Need a Lawyer

- You may need a lawyer to interpret the laws that affect you as a citizen.
- Legal advice can be costly so ask about fees before hiring an attorney.
- Check friends or family members for recommendations.
- Choose a lawyer qualified to handle your type of problem. Check with state legal associations for specialty areas.



# When You May Need a Lawyer

- People use lawyers who specialize in
  - buying and selling real estate
  - getting a fair divorce settlement
  - addressing failures to receive purchased products or services
  - assisting individuals when summoned or subpoenaed to court, or when arrested
  - representing individuals in court
  - writing a will or settling an estate



# Think About It



- ❖ *Jessica and Charles are purchasing a house listed as "for sale by owner." The owner promises to save them money if he can handle all the paperwork.*
- ❖ *What would you tell this couple to do?*



# Consumer Rights and Responsibilities

- Many laws have been passed to protect the free enterprise system and consumer participation in it.
- Consumer responsibilities come with the
  - right to information
  - right to choose
  - right to safety
  - right to be heard

# The Right to Information

- You have a right to accurate information and truthful product labels, claims, and advertisements.
- You are responsible for
  - reading labels and service contracts carefully
  - comparing products well
  - knowing what to expect from a product before buying it
  - following use-and-care instructions

# The Right to Choose

- The free enterprise economy is protected by laws against monopolies.
- ***Monopoly*** – The exclusive possession and control of a product or service.



# The Right to Choose

- You have the right to choose from many products and services as a result of competition in the economy.
- ***Competition*** – Two or more parties acting independently to offer the most favorable product or terms.
- You are responsible for
  - comparing products and services
  - making choices that best fit your needs





# The Right to Safety

- You have the right to protection from unsafe products.
- You are responsible for
  - using products safely and as they were meant to be used
  - following safety directions
  - notifying the store and manufacturer of unsafe products, and possibly the appropriate government office

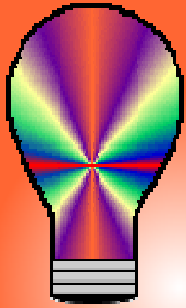
# The Right to Be Heard

- If a product or service doesn't meet your expectations, you have the right to recourse.
- ***Recourse*** – The right to complain and receive an appropriate response.
- Be prepared to go as far as necessary to reach satisfaction.
- You may want to file a complaint with a consumer-protection agency.

# The Right to Be Heard

- If you are unable to resolve a problem with a customer service department, contact a supervisor, the store's manager, or its main office.





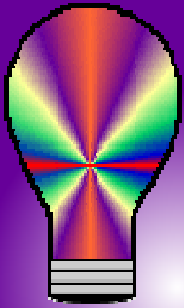
# Think About It

- ❖ *Explain the importance of voting.*
- ❖ *Describe how laws are made.*
- ❖ *Identify situations when you may need to hire a lawyer and describe how you would select one.*
- ❖ *Explain your consumer rights and responsibilities.*



# Chapter 31: In the Know

- Voting is one of the most important rights of U.S. citizens.
- U.S. laws fall into two categories: civil law and public law.
- At some point, you may need a lawyer to help you interpret laws that affect you.
- As a consumer in a free enterprise economy, you have several important rights and responsibilities.



# Chapter 31: Think More About It

- ❖ *Do you try to follow the laws of the nation and encourage others to do so?*
- ❖ *What is the title of the executive head(s) in your local government?*
- ❖ *What would you do to find a competent lawyer?*
- ❖ *What would you say to people who abuse their consumer rights and responsibilities?*