

Lawyers and Paralegals

Becoming a lawyer

- 3 years of law school
- Primary criteria for admission – LSAT score and undergraduate GPA
- Law schools in Virginia
 - University of Virginia (public)
 - Washington and Lee University (private)
 - College of William and Mary (public)
 - George Mason University (public)
 - University of Richmond (private)
 - Regents University (private)
 - Appalachian School of Law (private and unaffiliated with a university)
 - Liberty University
- Undergraduate preparation
 - Pick a major in which you will excel academically
 - Take courses that will develop critical thinking, analytical, and writing skills
- Good websites
 - Law School Admission Council – www.lsac.org
 - American Bar Association – www.abanet.org
 - The Princeton Review – www.princetonreview.com
 - Pre-Law Advisors National Council - www.planc.org

Becoming a paralegal

- Certificate programs at community colleges, universities, and free-standing institutes (as well as online programs)
- A good way to find out if being a lawyer is of interest
- Responsibilities vary greatly, depending on the desires of the employer
 - Interview witnesses
 - Organize files, especially in preparation for trial
 - Conduct real estate title searches
 - Prepare legal documents (simple wills, simple contracts, real estate transactions, etc.)
- Good websites
 - American Bar Association – www.abanet.org/legalservices/paralegals
 - American Association for Paralegal Education - www.aafpe.org
- Recommendation – attend an ABA-accredited program (see ABA website above for a list of accredited programs)