

Easy reference guide to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on 10 December 1948

This text is a plain language version of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights compiled by the New Zealand Human Rights Commission.

- Article 1 Everyone is born free and equal in dignity and rights.
- Article 2 Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms in this Declaration.
- Article 3 Everyone has the right to life and to live in freedom and safety.
- Article 4 No one can be forced into slavery.
- Article 5 No one can be tortured or treated cruelly.
- Article 6 Everyone has the right to be treated equally by the law.
- Article 7 The law is the same for everyone and should be applied in the same way to everyone.
- Article 8 Everyone has the right to ask for legal help when their rights are not respected.
- Article 9 No one can be randomly imprisoned or sent away from their own country.
- Article 10 Everyone has the right to a fair and public trial by an independent court.
- Article 11 Everyone should be considered innocent until proved guilty.
- Article 12 Nobody can interfere with someone's family, home, privacy or correspondence without good reason. Everybody has the right to be protected from such actions.
- Article 13 Everyone has the right to travel wherever they want within their own country. Everyone also has the right to leave their country and to return to it.
- Article 14 Everyone has the right to go to another country and ask for protection if they are being mistreated or are in danger.
- Article 15 Everyone has the right to belong to a country. Nobody can be prevented from belonging to another country without good reason.
- Article 16 All men and women have the right to marry and have a family.
- Article 17 Everyone has the right to own property and possessions.
- Article 18 Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion. Everyone has the right to practice a religion. Everyone also has the right not to practice a religion.
- Article 19 Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression.
- Article 20 Everyone has the right to peacefully take part in meetings and belong to groups.
- Article 21 Everyone has the right to choose to take part in the government of their country. The will of the people is the foundation for the authority of government. The will of the people is expressed in free and fair elections.
- Article 22 Everyone has the right to social security and is entitled to economic, social and cultural rights.
- Article 23 Everyone has the right to work, the right to equal pay for equal work and the right to a decent income and working conditions. Everyone also has the right to form and to join trade unions.
- Article 24 Everyone has the right to have time to relax and have fun.
- Article 25 Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for health and wellbeing. Motherhood and childhood are entitled to special care and help.
- Article 26 Everyone has the right to free education. Primary school education should be available to everyone. Everybody should also have access to higher education.
- Article 27 Everyone has the right to participate in their community's cultural life.
- Article 28 Everyone has the right to live in a society in which the rights and freedoms in this Declaration are available.
- Article 29 Everyone has a responsibility to ensure that the rights of others are respected.
- Article 30 No one has the right to try and take away any of the rights in this Declaration.