

This booklet tells you how to vote in Scotland.
You can get information about how to vote in
England, Wales and Northern Ireland from
the Electoral Commission.



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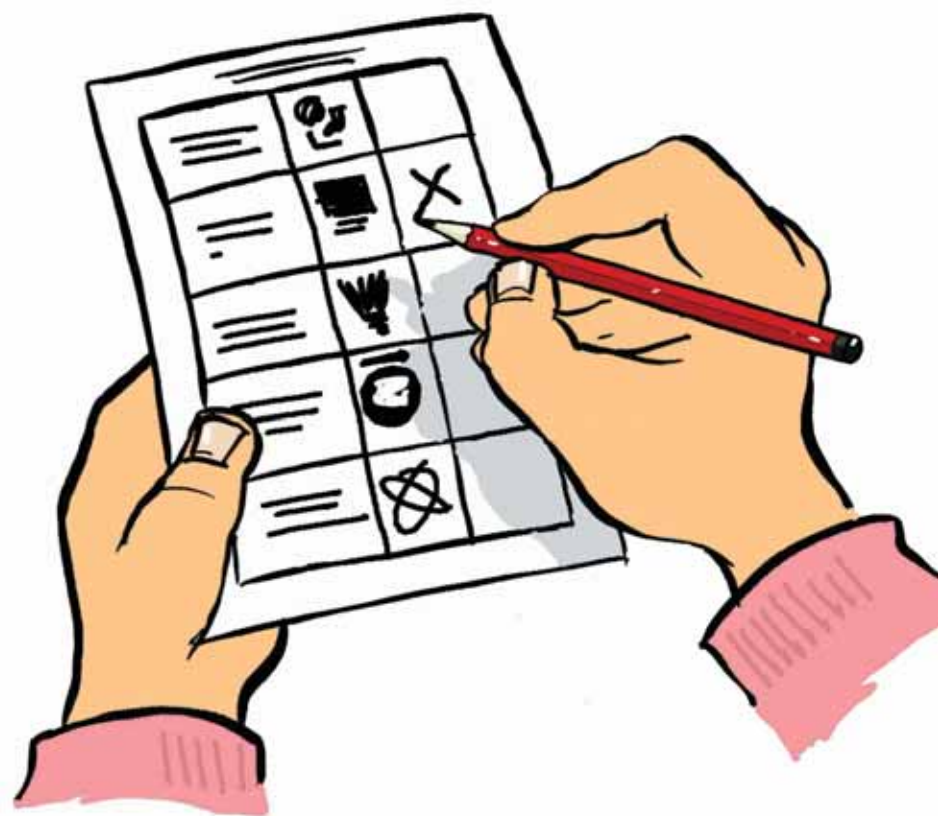
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Voting in Scotland

**This booklet tells you how to vote
and why it is important to vote**

Voting

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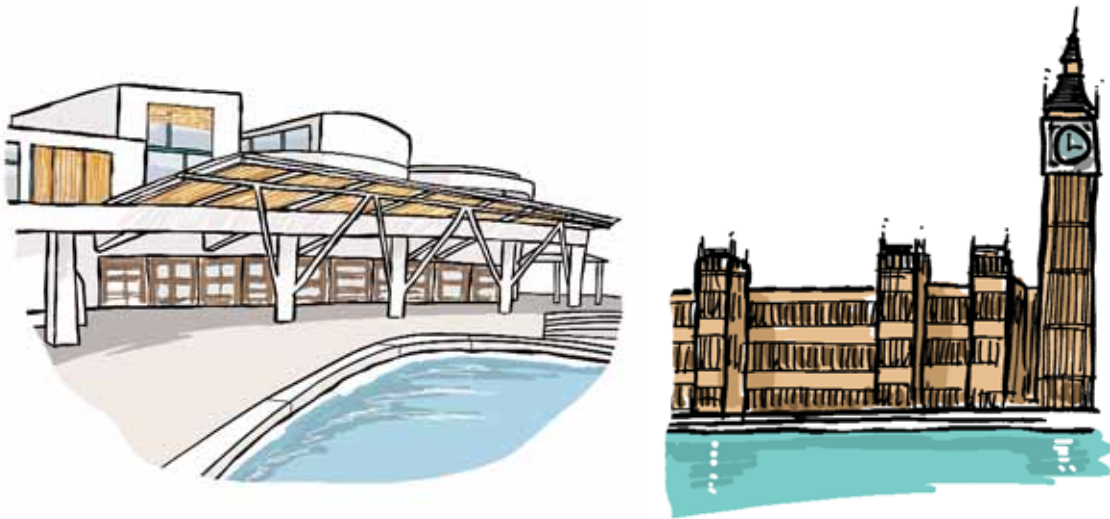
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What is voting?

Voting is your chance to help to choose the people who run your council, Scotland, the UK and Europe.



The time when you vote is called an **election**.

All votes are equal – your vote is as important as anyone else's vote.

It does not cost anything to vote.

Who can vote?

Almost **all** men and women over 18 years old can vote.



Why should I vote?

Your vote helps to choose the people who run your council, Scotland, the UK or Europe. These people decide things which affect everyone, such as how schools, hospitals and buses are run.

So it is important that everyone has a say in who is elected.



How do I make sure I can vote?

It is very easy to vote.

Make sure your name is on the **Electoral Register** for your area. This is a list of everyone who can vote.

You can phone your local electoral registration office to make sure you are on this list. You can find the phone number at www.aboutmyvote.co.uk



The local electoral registration office sends a form to every home every autumn to check who should be on the list. You or someone else in your home must fill in the form and send it back to the local electoral registration office.

But you can give the electoral registration office your details at any other time if you want. Phone your local electoral registration office to find out how to give your details.

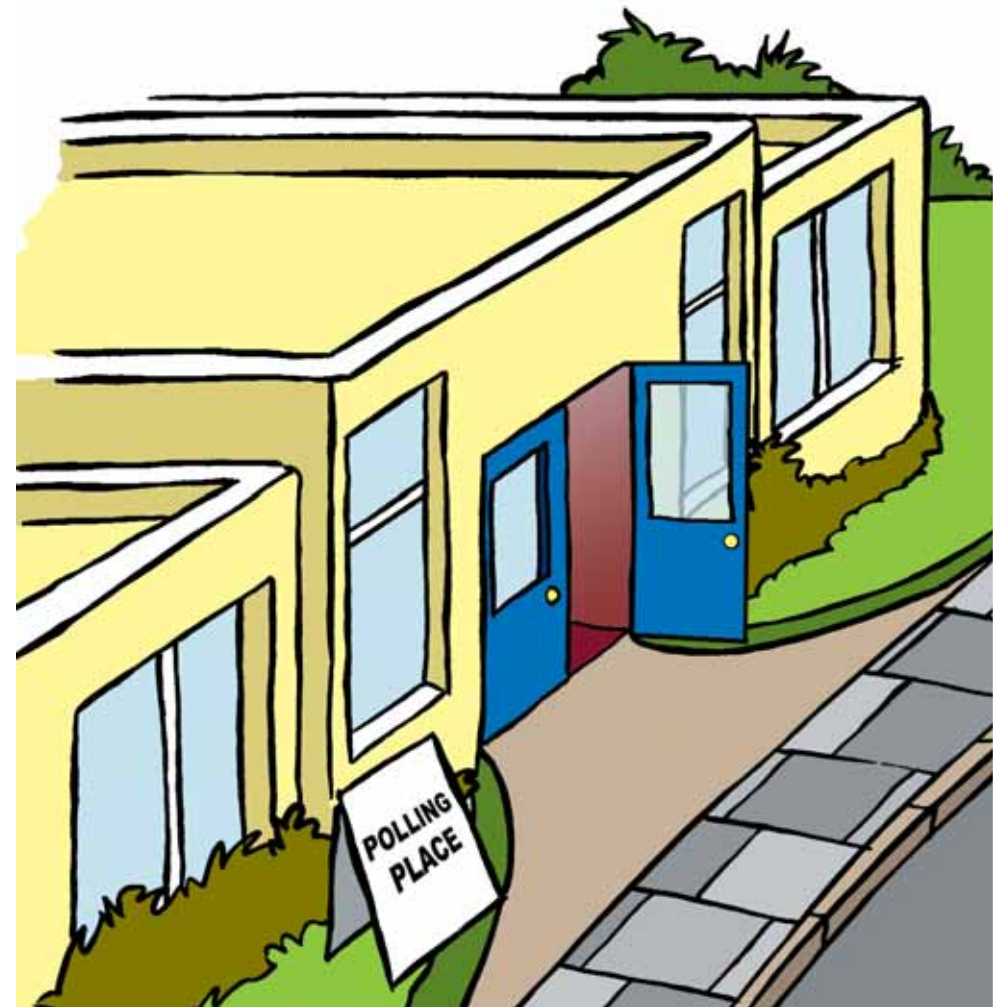
The council will send you a card just before an election. This is called a **poll card**. The card tells you where and when to vote.



How do I vote?

On election day, you go to the **polling place**. The polling place is usually a school or local hall near where you live.

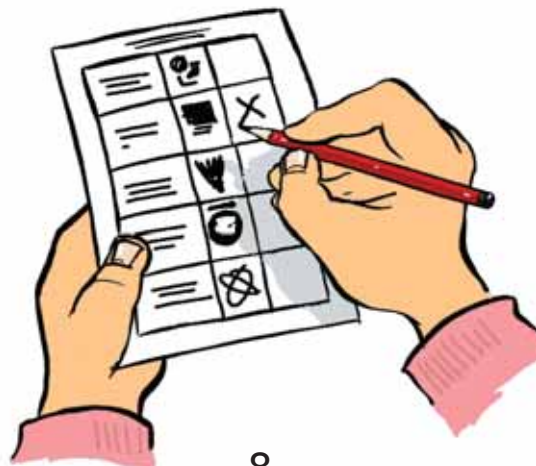
Polling is another word for **voting**.



Tell the people at the polling place your **name** and **address**. If you like, you can take your **poll card** with you to show who you are.



The people at the polling place will give you a list of the people or parties you can vote for. This is called a **ballot paper**. You may be given 2 ballot papers if there are 2 elections on the same day.



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Go into a **polling booth** and choose the person or party you want to vote for.

In elections for the Scottish Parliament, the UK Parliament and the European Parliament you vote using **Xs**.

In elections for your council you vote using numbers.

If you ask them, the people at the polling place will explain how to vote in the different sorts of election.



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After you have filled in the ballot paper, you should put it in the **ballot box**.



If you do not know what to do, you can ask the people at the **polling place** to help you.



Postal vote

If you cannot get to the polling place, you can ask your local electoral registration office for a **postal vote**.

Your **ballot paper** will be sent to you at home. You can fill in the ballot paper and post it back.



If you want a postal vote, phone your local electoral registration office.

Proxy vote

Sometimes you can let someone else vote for you. This is called a **proxy vote**.



You can only have a proxy vote if you cannot go to the polling place and you have not asked for a postal vote.

The person you choose to vote for you must vote for the person you want.



If you want a proxy vote, phone your local electoral registration office. They will send you a form to fill in.

What happens next?

When voting is over, the votes are counted.



The people and parties who get the most seats help to decide how to run your council, Scotland, the UK or Europe.



You can tell the people who are elected what you think about things or what you would like them to do. You can do this by talking to them.



Or you can e-mail or write to them.



Or you may be able to go to public meetings to speak to them.



If you think they have done a good job, you may want to vote for them again.

If you do **not** think they have done a good job, you may want to vote for someone else next time!



Finding out more

This booklet tells you a bit about how to vote.

If you want more information, you can ask your local electoral registration office.

You can find the phone number on the website www.aboutmyvote.co.uk



You can get more copies of this booklet from the Electoral Commission:

Telephone: **0845 8500 501**

E-mail: infoscotland@electoralcommission.org.uk

Web: www.aboutmyvote.co.uk

Make sure you tell them the product code EC4S.