

# Family History Electoral rolls

Electoral rolls list people eligible and registered to vote, whether at federal, state or local government elections. Electoral rolls can provide useful information, showing where a person may have lived over time.

## What is the history behind the “right to vote”?

**19<sup>th</sup> Century:** a property qualification excluded some people from voting. Those who owned property in different electorates could vote in each.

### Compulsory enrolment:

- From **1925**, voting in Federal elections became compulsory for those over 21,
- and from **1973**, for those over 18.

### Women got the vote

In Australia women who were British subjects, and over 21 years, gained the right to vote in:

- South Australia 1894
- Western Australia 1899
- New South Wales 1902
- Tasmania 1903
- Queensland 1905
- Victoria 1908
- Australia (Commonwealth) 1902

**Australian Aboriginal women and men** were granted the right to vote in 1962.

Source: AUSFOLIO Volume 2, Number 1 SOCOM Educational Resources 1993.

## What information is on the electoral roll?

Information on electoral rolls includes:

- full name,
- address,
- and, between 1903 and 1984, the voter’s occupation.

**Note:** Electoral rolls may not be a real time image of where people were living, their occupation etc.

## How are electoral rolls organised?

- **Check electoral maps for an electorate name.** Boundaries for an electorate change over time. For 19<sup>th</sup> century Qld and NSW electoral boundaries there are State Archives guides at the family history desk, level 3. Post 1901 check *Commonwealth of Australia 1901-1988 electoral redistributions*.
- **Until 1988:** rolls were arranged by state then by electorate, division and subdivision. Names were then organised alphabetically within the subdivision.
- **1989:** rolls were organised alphabetically within divisions by state.
- **From 1991:** rolls were organised alphabetically by name within each state.
- **Post 1901:** State Library holds Commonwealth Rolls: these are organised by state.

Some electoral rolls on CD-ROM (1903, 1913, 1922, 1941, 1949, 1959, 1969) allow more flexible searching e.g. by street, occupation. Find a woman’s married name if her given names are distinctive.

## What are annotated electoral rolls and how can they be used?

Annotated electoral rolls are marked with:

- the new surname of a recently married woman
- change of address or
- date of notification of someone’s death

As a result, these rolls can flag another electorate to search or approximately when someone died.

These electoral rolls are only held at:

- **1918-1968:** National Archives of Australia [www.naa.gov.au](http://www.naa.gov.au) (Commonwealth electorates)
- **1915-1992:** Queensland State Archives <https://www.qld.gov.au/recreation/arts/heritage/archives> (State electorates)

## What is the silent electoral roll?

It is compulsory to be on the electoral roll but not on the published list. Some examples of those not on the lists are: people in witness protection programs, police undercover work or victims of domestic violence.

For additional information on electoral history check the Australian Electoral Commission website <http://www.aec.gov.au/Elections/>.

## What electoral rolls are available at State Library of Queensland?

Most of the following resources can be viewed in the Family History area on level 3.

<b>Queensland</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ 1860-1900 (Ask for Guide at Desk)</li><li>➤ 1860-84, 1889 State [CD-ROM]</li><li>➤ 1895, 1896, 1900, 1901 State [CD-ROM]</li><li>➤ 1903-2008</li><li>➤ 2012, 2014 State (Request from storage)</li><li>➤ 2015 State (Open access level 4)</li><li>➤ 2017 State – Available <i>onsite only</i> through the</li><li>➤ 1903 Commonwealth [CD-ROM]</li><li>➤ 1905, 1906, 1909, 1910, 1912 State [CD-ROM]</li><li>➤ 1913 Commonwealth [CD-ROM]</li><li>➤ 1915 State [CD-ROM]</li><li>➤ 1922, 1934, 1941, 1949, 1959, 1969 Commonwealth [CD-ROM]</li></ul>	MFL 324.94 (Open access microfilm) QCFS 324.6409943 QCFS 324.6409943 FICHE/S 324.94/q ; MFCS 324.94/q S 324.94 003 (Level 4) REFJ 324.9943 ELE OneSearch catalogue QCFS 324.6409943 QCFS 324.6409943 QCFS 324.6409943 QCFS 324.6409943
<b>New South Wales</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ 1842-64 (Ask for guide at the Desk)</li><li>➤ 1903-2008</li><li>➤ 1903 [CD-ROM]</li><li>➤ 1913, State [CD-ROM]</li><li>➤ 1935 Commonwealth [CD-ROM]</li></ul>	(Open access AO fiches 768-779); MFCS 324.94/n QCFS 324.640994 2003- QCFS 324.6409944 QCFS 324.6409944
<b>Victoria</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ 1841-1851</li><li>➤ 1899 only</li><li>➤ 1856; 1903-2008</li><li>➤ 1903, 1939 [CD-ROM]</li></ul>	MFCS 324.945 1994 MFCS 324.6409945 1986 MFCS 324.94/v QCFS 324.640994 2003-
<b>Tasmania</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ 1856-1900 – imperfect</li><li>➤ 1914-2008</li><li>➤ 1903 [CD-ROM]</li></ul>	MFL 324.640946 MFCS 324.94 com/t QCFS 324.640994 2003-
<b>ACT</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ 1928-2008</li></ul>	MFCS 324.94 com/a
<b>WA</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ 1901-2008</li><li>➤ 1901 [CD-ROM]</li><li>➤ 1939, 1949 [CD-ROM]</li></ul>	MFCS 324.94 com/w QCFS 324.640994 2003- QCFS 324.64099441 2010
<b>SA</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ 1991-2008</li><li>➤ 1909 [CD-ROM]</li><li>➤ 1939, 1941, 1943 [CD-ROM]</li></ul>	MFCS 324.94 com/s QCFS 324.640994 2003- QCFS 324.640994 2010
<b>NT</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ 1922-2008</li><li>➤ 1884-1940 [CD-ROM]</li></ul>	MFCS 324.94 com/nt QCFS 929.39429 2006
<b>New Zealand</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ 1853-1874/75; 1880/81-1887; 1890; 1893-1894; 1896-1897; 1899-1900; 1902-1903; 1905/6; 1908; 1911; 1914; 1919; 1922; 1925; 1928; 1931; 1935; 1938; 1941; 1943; 1946; 1975; 1978; 1981</li><li>➤ 1881, 1893, 1896 [CD-ROM]</li><li>➤ 1911, 1935 [CD-ROM]</li></ul>	MFCS 324.993 (See also <i>New Zealand Electoral Atlas</i> FAMHIS 328.3345 1989) QCFS 929.393 2010 QCFS 929.393 2010


Check **Ancestry (Library edition)**, available at State Library, to search across Commonwealth electoral rolls for most states between 1903 and 1980.

Check **Find My Past**, available at State Library, to search a range of electoral rolls for all states and New Zealand, pre and post 1900.

For current Queensland electoral roll searches visit Queensland Electoral Commission Brisbane office. <https://www.ecq.qld.gov.au/enrol-to-vote/enrol-or-update-your-enrolment>

## Need further information?

(07) 3840 7810 | <https://www.slq.qld.gov.au/plan-my-visit/services/ask-us>

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