

Please note that this webpage is no longer up and the links below no longer work. Nevertheless, they concisely list key pros and cons to going to law school.

Formerly at <http://edudemic.com/2011/01/law-school/>

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## Why You **SHOULD** and **SHOULDN'T** Go To Law School

*The following is a guest post by Ann Levine, a friend of Edudemic and law school admission consultant. Be sure to check out her blog [Get In: Law School](#) and her past articles on Edudemic.*



I am proud to be a lawyer and I am proud to help other people reach their dream of becoming a lawyer. However, there have been numerous stories recently that may discourage you from applying to

law school. There are negative and disgruntled law students and attorneys warning you about the evils of law schools, of the profession, and of anyone remotely related to it. My goal is to make sure you don't join that disgruntled bunch.

So, if you decide to go to law school, you need to feel that the benefits outweigh the sacrifices and potential drawbacks that many of the naysayers routinely harp on. Go into it with your eyes wide open, ready to work hard, ready to make your way and create your own career. You won't expect anyone to hand you a six figure job at graduation. You will go into this with an understanding of the realities of the profession. You will know that success does not happen overnight, that your dream job isn't the first job out of law school, but the one you hold ten years down the road.

There is no fast track to success in law school or in anything else in life. The key is to make the best decisions you can about your future with the information you currently have at your disposal.

I want you to really consider whether to go to law school, and I want to share the questions you should be asking before you go. Plus, I want to make sure you are equipped to make good decisions about where to attend.

### **Let's start here: Reasons NOT to Go to Law School:**

1. [Money](#) (How much does law school cost and how can I pay for it?)
2. Time (three years full-time, 4 years part-time)
3. [Bad career outlook in current economic environment](#)
4. [It's difficult](#)
5. [It's competitive](#)
6. [There are too many lawyers](#)

### **Now, the Reasons TO Attend Law School:**

1. Learning how to think
2. Profession you can always rely upon/Job security
3. Helping others/contributing to the community
4. Being important and respected
5. Financial security, prosperity



You need to do your research about each one of these pros and cons. How much can you expect to make in the area of law you plan on pursuing? What would your student loan payment be? Your rent? Your car payment? Etc.

So, how can you research this? Talk to lawyers in big firms, lawyers who work for the public defender, lawyers who work in a firm with only two or three attorneys, or insurance defense attorneys. Ask them how much they made in their first five years of practice and how much they made after ten years. Ask them what they really do all day. Ask them to describe a typical case they are working on.

Ask them what time they get to the office everyday and what time they leave. Ask them if they like their jobs.

Ask them where they went to law school. Did they take a scholarship to a lower ranked school? Why or why not?

Do top law schools open some doors? Do you want to clerk for the Supreme Court? Be a law professor? I suggest you look up people who have jobs you would like to have one day and see where they went to law school.

It's essential you have a firm grasp on what the profession entails before you commit. Comparing and contrasting the answers to these questions with your expectations is key to helping you make your decision.

If you've gone through this thought process and you still decide to attend law school, you will know what you are getting yourself into. You will be in a position to make good decisions about your future. And then you'll be ready to hear this podcast: [How to Get Hired as a Rookie Attorney](#).

### **About the Author**

Ann K. Levine, Esq., is a law school admission consultant and the former director of admissions for two ABA law schools. Since 2004, she has helped thousands gain admission to law school through her consulting company, [Law School Expert](#). She is the author of the bestselling law school guide, [The Law School Admission Game: Play Like an Expert](#). Ms. Levine graduated magna cum laude from the University of Miami School of Law. Got a question? E-mail her at [getinlawschool@usnews.com](mailto:getinlawschool@usnews.com) or [follow her](#) on Twitter.