

# TYPES OF LAW PROGRAMS

## JD Degree

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If you want to practice law in the United States, you'll probably need this degree, but it's also useful in other career paths. The JD degree is considered to be a "first degree" in law. In other words, if you want to practice law in the United States, you will, in almost all cases, need a JD degree. But a JD isn't just for people who want to become lawyers. Some people use a JD to become a law librarian, enter the world of academia, or go into consulting, among other careers. You might also find it useful if you want to enter politics or do advocacy work.

### About this Degree:

- Usually a three-year, full-time program, but can also be part-time.
- Admission requires a bachelor's degree.
- LSAT is an integral part of the admission process.
- Additionally, every school has its own set of requirements. Make sure you know what your schools require so that you can apply efficiently.

## LLM Degree

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This degree helps people who already have a JD or equivalent degree expand their knowledge or study a specialized area of law. An LLM, or Master of Laws, is a graduate qualification in the field of law. The LLM was created for lawyers to expand their knowledge, study a specialized area of law, and gain international qualifications if they have earned a law degree outside the U.S. or Canada. If you're looking to advance your legal career or take the next step in your academic journey, an LLM could be for you.

### About this Degree:

- JD degree (or international equivalent) required for admission.
- Can help you specialize and extend your credentials in a specific area.
- For international students, can offer exposure to U.S. or Canadian law systems, common law legal reasoning, and comparative law studies.

## Master's Degree

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If you're interested in how the legal system works, but you aren't looking to become a lawyer, a master's degree in law could be for you. This interdisciplinary approach to the law is for people who don't want to practice law but need legal knowledge to get ahead in their chosen profession. A master's program in law can help you learn the intricacies of negotiations and contracts; understand the social, political, and economic impacts of the law; and better navigate legal procedures in certain fields. Some of these programs may complement the legal training students receive with courses from another school or division within the university.

### About this Degree:

- Includes Master of Science in Laws (MSL), Master of Legal Studies (MLS) degrees, and Juris Master (JM), among others.
- Often can be earned in one year; online and part-time programs available.
- Admission requires a bachelor's degree.

## Legal Certificate

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Earning a legal certificate is an increasingly appealing option for people wishing to either broaden their knowledge of the law or deepen their focus in a particular area. These programs require less of a time commitment compared to other law degree options and are also relatively affordable. People seeking to become paralegals, court reporters, or legal administrative assistants might find value in a certificate program. These programs may also be appealing to those who are already lawyers and who seek direct access to advanced law courses and specialized training on a short-term basis.

### About this Degree:

- Areas of study vary; some are broad, others are more specialized.
- Can be completed in as little as three months; online options available.
- Often an industry-specific credential, especially in highly regulated areas.