

How politics works

Factsheet: Political Parties



A **political party** is a group of ordinary people who join together because they have similar ideas about things.



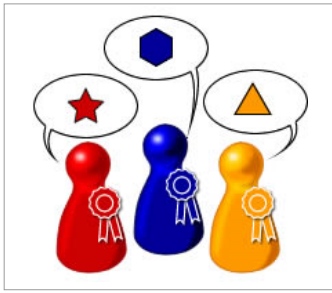
A **political party** can have ideas about how to run the whole country, or a **political party** can have ideas about just one thing that they think is important.



There are some rules, but anyone can join a political party or set up a **political party** if they follow them. You can find out about these rules from the **Electoral Commission**.



There are many different **political parties**. The main ones in England are The Labour Party, The Conservative Party and The Liberal Democrats Party.



Each of these **political parties** has different ideas about how to run the country.



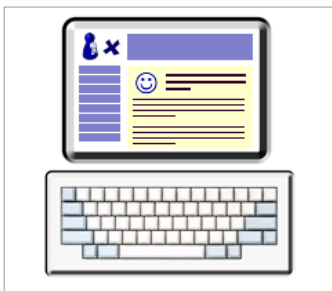
It is important to know what each **political party** thinks. This can help you decide whether you want to join a **political party**, or **vote** for them at an **election**.



Most **political parties** publish information to tell people about their ideas. These ideas are called **policies**. This information is called a **manifesto**.



This manifesto can tell people about ideas the **political party** has about things like health, education, law and order, and the environment.



Some **political parties** have a website to tell people about their ideas. They may have a local club or office where people can go to find out more about them.



When there is an **election**, most **political parties** print leaflets which they post through peoples doors to tell them about what they will do if they win the election.



Each **political party** chooses a person to be in an **election** on their behalf. This person is called a **candidate**.



Most of the **Local Politicians**, **MPs** and **MEPs** who help to run the country are members of a **political party**.



Not every **candidate** in an election needs to be a member of a **political party**. A **candidate** can be someone with their own ideas about things. This is called being an **independent candidate**.



Politicians who are members of a **political party** normally support the ideas of that party, but they can sometimes disagree.



A politician does not have to stay in a **political party**. They can swap to another **political party** if they prefer, or become independent.



The **political party** who has the most **MPs** after a **general election** gets to form the **Government**.



This means that, depending on who wins the **general election**, we may have a Labour Government, a Conservative Government, or a Liberal Democrat Government.



If one **political party** does not win the **general election** outright, then **political parties** may have to run the country together.



To find out about the main political parties you can go to:

www.conservatives.com

www.labour.org.uk

www.libdems.org.uk



To find out about other political parties you can go to:

www.parliament.uk

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