# [**How to Notarize a Document**](http://www.wikihow.com/Notarize-a-Document)

A notary public is a person trained and authorized by the state to certify documents. It is necessary to notarize certain legal documents in order for them to be valid. A notary public must witness a person signing a document and verify his or her identity to notarize a document. Notaries public will sign and stamp your document with a seal. They may also fill out a notarial journal and provide you with a notarial certificate for your document. Getting a document notarized is a simple process once you have located a notary public to provide this legal service.

**Fill out the document, leaving the signatures blank.** The notary must witness all parties signing the completed document. Make sure you fill out the document, except for the signatures, before meeting with the notary.[[1]](http://www.wikihow.com/Notarize-a-Document#_note-1)

* Fill in all blank spaces such as the locations of properties bought or sold, the names of the parties to an agreement, etc.
* Don't sign contracts or binding documents that you have not thoroughly read

**Consider hiring a lawyer to review the document.** If your document is legal in nature, or will be legally binding on you or other parties, you may wish an attorney look over the document.[[3]](http://www.wikihow.com/Notarize-a-Document#_note-3) By hiring a legal professional to this, you can protect yourself from unwanted consequences due to language in the document. These professionals can make sure that your document is viable.

* Once a document is notarized, you cannot change it, so it must be correct before you notarize.[[4]](http://www.wikihow.com/Notarize-a-Document#_note-4)
* A lawyer can read the document and point out any errors or loopholes you should correct.
* You can get an attorney review at any time, but the document will need notarization again if changes are necessary. Getting a review first can save time and money later.
* Even if you do not hire an attorney to look over the document, make sure that the document meets all the legal requirements.

**Print a copy of the document you need to have notarized.** The person signing the document must provide it for notarization. The notary public will not provide legal documents. Their only job is to act as a means to validate the authenticity of the document. They are unlikely to make a copy of your document

**Provide a copy to all who must sign.** Contact those who must sign the document and give them copies to look over in advance. They may wish to hire their own legal professional to help them examine the document. They may also wish to make changes. Give them the document before you go to the notary public to avoid complications.

* If you are the only person who must sign the document, then you don’t need to contact other parties.
* Ask the other parties to examine the document closely.

**Make sure the document has a space for the notary to sign and place their seal.** This is usually near the end of the document or near the place where you will sign. The seal and signature of the notary public serves as an authenticating mark.[[6]](http://www.wikihow.com/Notarize-a-Document#_note-6) Once this seal is placed, the binding nature of the information in your document if officially recognized.

* A notary will not be able to notarize your document if this space is not included.[[7]](http://www.wikihow.com/Notarize-a-Document#_note-7)
* If your document is not signed and sealed, it will not be considered official.