

HOW TO CHOOSE A PERSONAL INJURY LAWYER



Personal injury lawyers will represent you when you are bringing a case against someone else for injuries they may have caused, or they may represent you to defend against someone bringing a similar case against you. Either way, choosing a personal injury lawyer you can afford and feel comfortable with is incredibly important. Be aware that lawsuits must be filed within a certain period of time or else the statute of limitations will run and you may not be able to file your case (time limits usually range from 1 to 6 years), so be sure to work diligently yet carefully in finding the right candidate for you.^[1] Follow the instructions below in order to choose the best personal injury lawyer possible.



1 UNDERSTAND WHY YOU NEED A PERSONAL INJURY ATTORNEY

A personal injury attorney is different from other types of attorneys because of their experience and expertise in a specific area of the law. If you have been injured due to someone else's negligence, or if you have allegedly injured another, you will want an attorney that knows how to handle your case.

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2 MAKE A LIST OF FACTORS THAT GO INTO CHOOSING A GOOD PERSONAL INJURY LAWYER

When you begin the process of choosing a personal injury attorney, you will want to understand what makes a lawyer good. With the following list in hand, you can begin searching for lawyers that meet your criteria.



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3 ASK FOR PERSONAL REFERRALS

Once you have a checklist of what makes a good personal injury lawyer, you will want to ask friends, family, neighbors, and coworkers if they know any good attorneys. You should start the process by looking for personal referrals because these are the attorneys who usually have the best reputations and are trustworthy.

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4 GOOGLE POTENTIAL LAWYER CANDIDATES

Try a simple Google search and see what you can come up with. Try to use this method in combination with other methods to get the best results.



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5 GO ONLINE AND LOCATE STRONG LAWYER CANDIDATES USING SPECIFIC WEB SERVICES

If you do not want to use Google, try some of the specific websites that are out there for the sole purpose of linking you up with a good attorney. Be careful when you use a website because some of them are simply commercial directories that will advertise any attorney that pays a fee.^[2]

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6 USE A PHONE TO RESEARCH STRONG LAWYER CANDIDATES

When you use a phone, contact bar associations and law firms. Talking to someone on the phone can help you get more specific information and may give you a better idea of someone's demeanor.



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7 MAKE A LIST OF YOUR TOP CHOICES

Now that you have done the initial research, make a comprehensive list of your top candidates you would like to know more about. Try to make the list a maximum of about 10 lawyers. The more lawyers you have on your list, the more time it will take to follow-up and the less you will have digging into each lawyer's specifics.

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8 PREPARE A LIST OF QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR BEST CANDIDATES

Before meeting with your top candidates, prepare a number of focused questions that will give you the answers you need in order to choose the best attorney for you. Use the following questions, and any others you feel are appropriate, when you sit down for an initial consultation.^[3]



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9 KNOW THE FACTS OF YOUR CASE AND HAVE AS MUCH DOCUMENTATION AS POSSIBLE

Before meeting with an attorney for an initial consultation, write down and know as many facts of your case as possible. One thing an attorney will do in an initial consultation is ask you about your case so he or she can gauge its likelihood of success. Be as detailed as possible and do not leave out even the most minor facts. Having documentation relating to your case is also extremely helpful.

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