

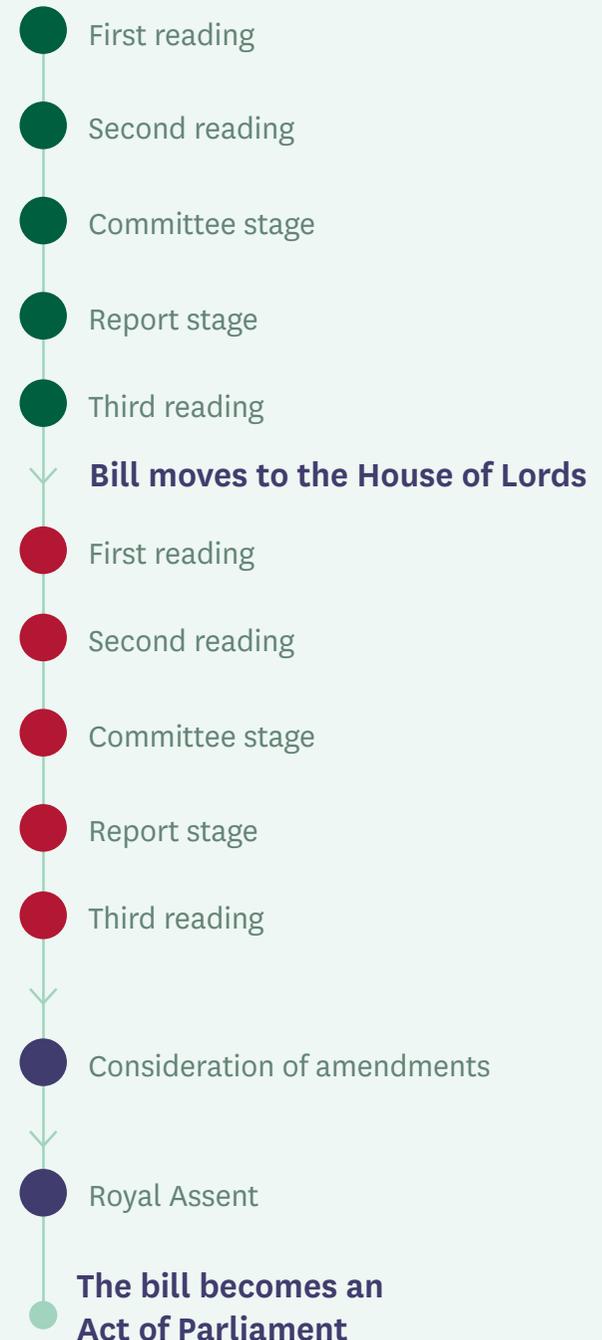


The journey from bill to law

Navigate through the journey of a bill by clicking on the different stages in each House

Most bills are put forward by the government. Because the government usually has a majority in the House of Commons, most government bills start here. Private Members Bills can be put forward by backbench MPs.

Stages of a bill starting in the House of Commons



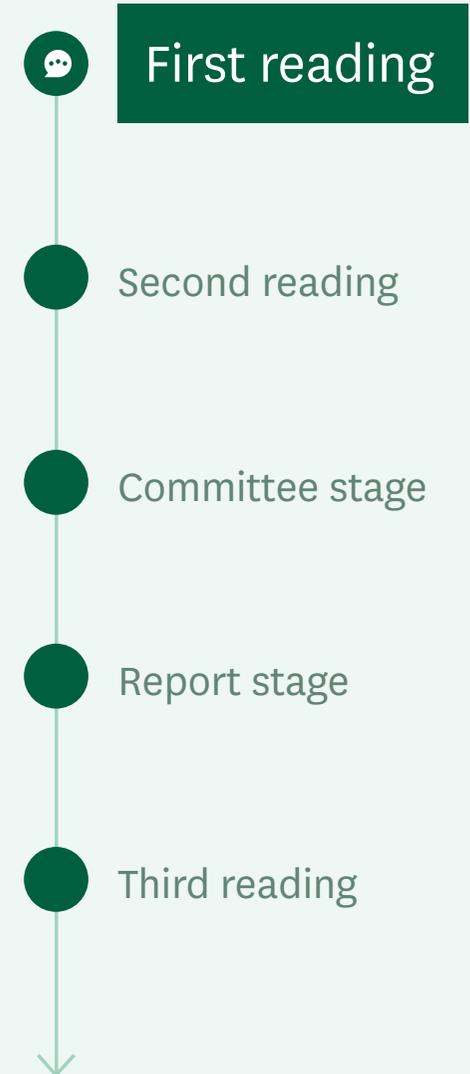
First reading

First reading is the formal introduction of a bill to the House of Commons.

There is no debate at this stage – the title of the bill is read and a date is set for the second reading. Afterwards the bill is usually published and printed allowing MPs to prepare for the debates.



Stages of a bill starting in the House of Commons



The bill moves to the House of Lords

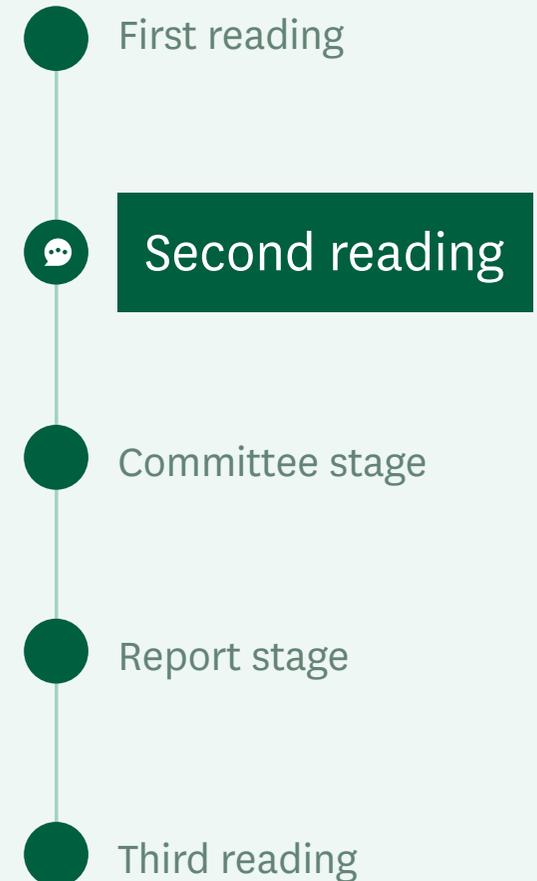
Second reading

Second reading is the first opportunity for MPs to debate the main principles of the bill.

The Government minister or MP who is responsible for the bill opens the debate, followed by an opposition spokesperson. Backbench MPs from all parties can contribute to the debate, and at the end a vote is held on whether to allow the bill to proceed.



Stages of a bill starting in the House of Commons



The bill moves to the House of Lords

Committee stage

Detailed examination of the bill takes place in committee stage, and members of the bill committee can table and vote on amendments to improve the bill.

Usually a group of between 16 and 50 MPs form a committee to conduct this line-by-line scrutiny, but some bills are dealt with by the whole house in the Chamber. Amendments can be put forward by any of the committee members, but only those selected by the chair will be discussed. The committee can also take evidence from experts and interest groups outside Parliament.



Stages of a bill starting in the House of Commons

● First reading

● Second reading

● **Committee stage**

● Report stage

● Third reading

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The bill moves to the House of Lords

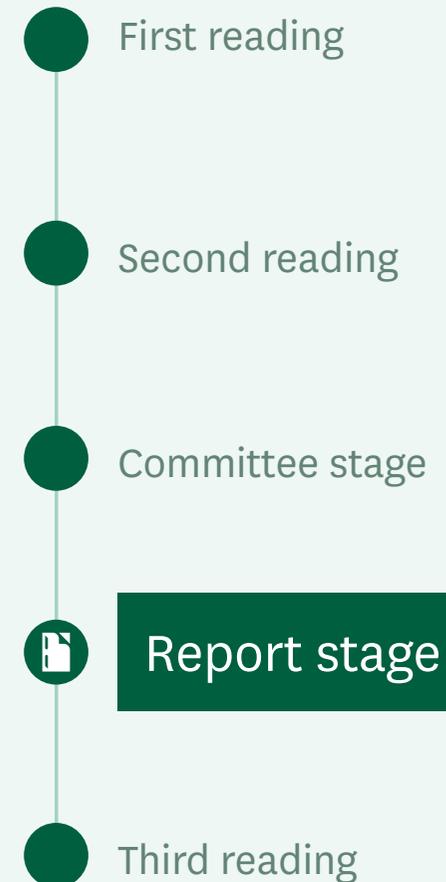
Report stage

Report stage allows MPs to make decisions about amendments to the bill as a whole house, and review any changes made in committee stage.

This stage involves debate, and often a series of votes to settle different opinions. Amendments and new clauses are decided upon at this stage. For long or complex bills, this stage will often take place over several days.



Stages of a bill starting in the House of Commons



The bill moves to the House of Lords

Third reading

Third reading is the final chance for MPs to debate the contents of a bill. No further changes can be made at this stage.

Third reading usually takes place straight after the report stage. The debate is generally short as it only covers what is in the bill, rather than any new ideas. Afterwards, the House votes on whether they are happy for the bill to move forward, after which it moves to the House of Lords.



Stages of a bill starting in the House of Commons

- First reading
- Second reading
- Committee stage
- Report stage

● **Third reading**

↓
The bill moves to the House of Lords

First reading

First reading is the formal introduction of a bill to the House of Lords.

There is no debate at this stage – the title of the bill is read, a date is set for the second reading. Before the second reading, members of the House of Lords who would like to contribute to the debate put their name on a list.



Stages in the House of Lords



First reading



Second reading



Committee stage



Report stage



Third reading



The bill goes through its final stages

Second reading

Second reading is an opportunity for Members of the House of Lords to debate the main principles of the bill.

The member of the House of Lords who is responsible for the bill opens the debate, followed by members from across the House. This stage often indicates members who have specific interest or expertise in the topics of the bill.



Stages in the House of Lords

First reading

Second reading

Committee stage

Report stage

Third reading

The bill goes through its final stages

Committee stage

Detailed line-by-line examination of the bill takes place in committee stage.

This takes place in the House of Lords Chamber and any member can put forward amendments and take part in the debate. Every clause of the bill must be agreed by voting and all amendments put forward by members are considered.



Stages in the House of Lords

● First reading

● Second reading

● **Committee stage**

● Report stage

● Third reading

↓
The bill goes through its final stages

Report stage

Report stage allows members of the House of Lords to put forward and consider further amendments to the bill, having reviewed any changes made in committee stage.

This stage involves debate and often a series of votes. Amendments and new clauses can be added at this stage.



Stages in the House of Lords

- First reading
- Second reading
- Committee stage
- **Report stage**
- Third reading

The bill goes through its final stages

Third reading

The aim of third reading in the House of Lords is to ensure the bill is as clear and effective as possible

Amendments can be made to the bill during this stage only if they have not previously been debated. At this stage, they are generally used to clarify parts of the bill.



Stages in the House of Lords

- First reading
- Second reading
- Committee stage
- Report stage
- **Third reading**

The bill goes through its final stages

Consideration of amendments

Both Houses must agree on the exact wording of the bill before it can become an Act of Parliament.

If the House of Lords made changes to the bill by adding amendments, it now returns to the House of Commons for these changes to be considered. The House of Commons can accept the Lords' amendments, or reject them and make alternative proposals, in which case the bill will be returned to the Lords. This process continues until both Houses agree and is sometimes referred to as **'ping pong'**.



Final stages
of a bill



Consideration of
amendments



Royal Assent

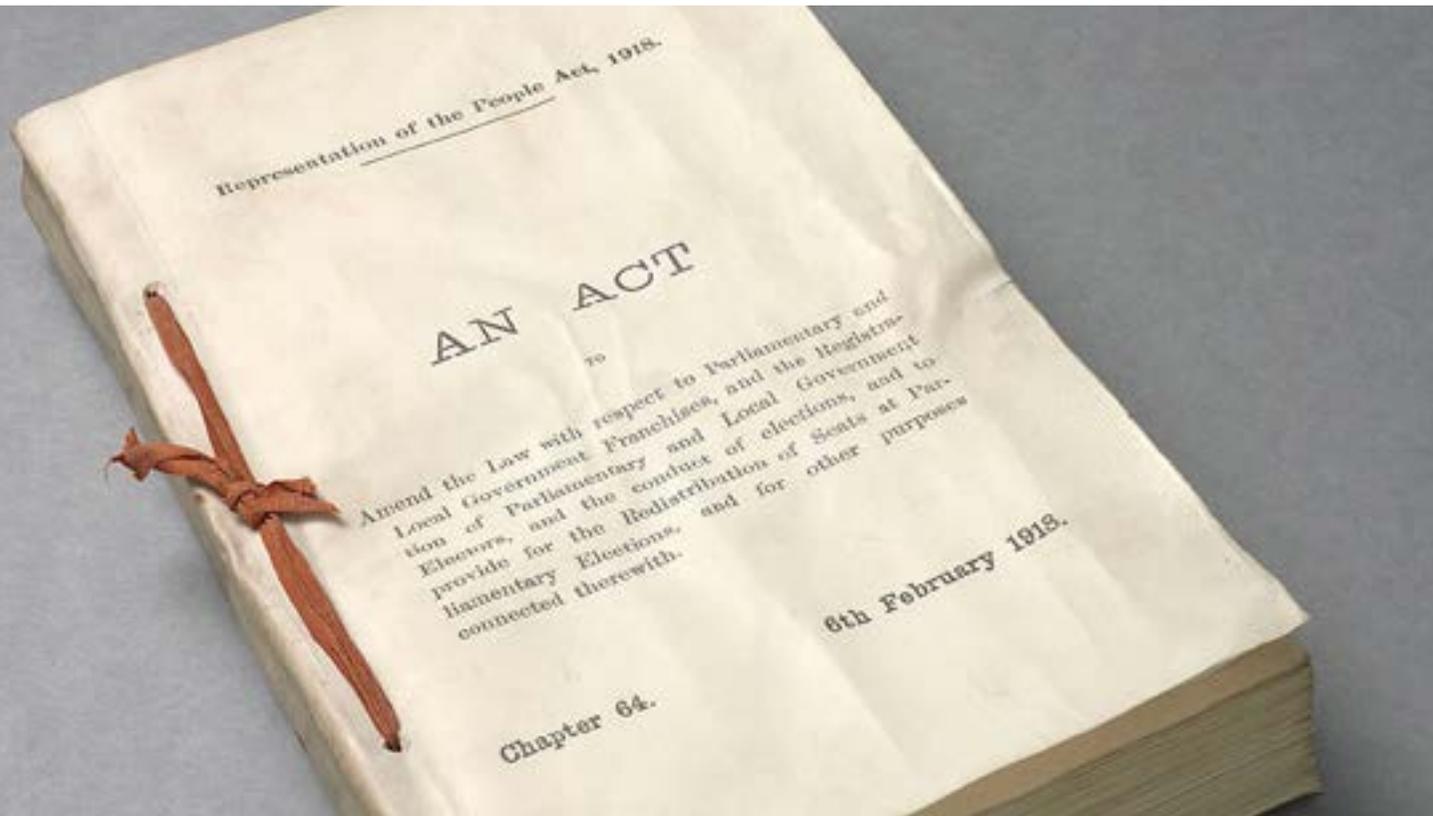


**The bill becomes an
Act of Parliament**

Royal Assent

Once a final version of the bill has been agreed by both Houses of Parliament, the Monarch's agreement turns the bill into an Act of Parliament.

This is a formality. Implementing the law becomes the responsibility of the government.



Final stages
of a bill

Consideration of
amendments

Royal Assent

The bill becomes an
Act of Parliament