

DEFINITION OF LAW

law (lô) *n.*

- **1.** A rule of conduct or procedure established by custom, agreement, or authority.
- **2. a.** The body of rules and principles governing the affairs of a community and enforced by a political authority; a legal system: *international law*. **b.** The condition of social order and justice created by adherence to such a system: *a breakdown of law and civilized behavior*.
- **3.** A set of rules or principles dealing with a specific area of a legal system: *tax law; criminal law*.
- **4.** A piece of enacted legislation.
- **5. a.** The system of judicial administration giving effect to the laws of a community: *All citizens are equal before the law*. **b.** Legal action or proceedings; litigation: *submit a dispute to law*. **c.** An impromptu or extralegal system of justice substituted for established judicial procedure: *frontier law*.
- **6. a.** An agency or agent responsible for enforcing the law. Often used with *the*: *"The law . . . stormed out of the woods as the vessel was being relieved of her cargo" Sid Moody*. **b.** *Informal* A police officer. Often used with *the*.
- **7. a.** The science and study of law; jurisprudence. **b.** Knowledge of law. **c.** The profession of an attorney.
- **8.** Something, such as an order or a dictum, having absolute or unquestioned authority: *The commander's word was law*.

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- **9. Law a.** The body of principles or precepts held to express the divine will, especially as revealed in the Bible.**b.** The first five books of the Hebrew Scriptures.
- **10.** A code of principles based on morality, conscience, or nature.
- **11. a.** A rule or custom generally established in a particular domain: *the unwritten laws of good sportsmanship*.**b.** A way of life: *the law of the jungle*.
- **12. a.** A statement describing a relationship observed to be invariable between or among phenomena for all cases in which the specified conditions are met: *the law of gravity*.**b.** A generalization based on consistent experience or results: *the law of supply and demand*.
- **13. Mathematics** A general principle or rule that is assumed or that has been proven to hold between expressions.
- **14.** A principle of organization, procedure, or technique: *the laws of grammar; the laws of visual perspective*.**intr.v. lawed, law-ing, laws** To go to law; litigate.**Idioms: a law unto (oneself)** A totally independent operator: *An executive who is a law unto herself*.**take the law into (one's) own hands** To mete out justice as one sees fit without due recourse to law enforcement agencies or the courts.[Middle English, from Old English lagu, from Old Norse *lagu, variant of lag, *that which is laid down*; see legh- in Indo-European roots.]

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Black's Law Dictionary (3rd edition)

“That which is laid down, ordained, or established. A rule or method according to which phenomena or actions co-exist or follow each other. A system of principles and rules of human conduct, being the aggregate of those commandments and principles which are either prescribed or recognized by the governing power in an organized jural society as its will in relation to the conduct of the members of such society and which it undertakes to maintain and sanction and to use as the criteria of the actions of such members.”

Law is the aggregate of all those principles and rules of human conduct, both present and past, which the governing power of a society prescribes and adopts for the conduct of the members of that society. The governing power of our society is exercised by national, state and local bodies. This principles and rules include the constitutions, treaties, the statutes of legislative bodies of administrative-territorial units, decisions of the court and regulations of ministries.

The ultimate goal of law is justice for all.

However, often justice and law are not synonymous.