

Lawmaking In Nebraska

Describe what happens during each stage of the lawmaking process.

Answers included are suggested pieces of information for students to find. Teachers must use their own discretion to determine the most important pieces of information for students to know.

Idea	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Senator or staff research problems and study solutions. ● A bill may be introduced to create a new law, repeal an existing law, or change a law. ● Senator brings idea for new law to a bill drafter, who helps put it in the proper legal form for a bill.
Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Senator brings idea for new law to a bill drafter, who helps put it in the proper legal form for a bill. ● Most bills are introduced during the first 10 days of each session. ● To introduce a bill, the senator files with the Clerk of the Legislature. ● The Legislative Fiscal Office prepares budget statements that estimate the changes in expenses or revenue if the bill becomes law.
Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Reference Committee decides which one of the 14 standing committees will work with the bill. ● Most bills must receive a public hearing by a committee. ● During the public hearing, citizens can express their opinions about the bill. ● After the hearing, the committee may: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ vote to send the bill to general file with or without amendments ○ Indefinitely postpone the bill ○ Take no action on it
General File	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● First time the full Legislature has the opportunity to debate and vote on bills. ● Senators think about amendments to the bills. ● Needs 25 votes to adopt amendments or move the bill to the next stage.
Enrollment & Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Previously adopted amendments are incorporated into a bill. ● Bill is checked to make sure it is written correctly, and has correct grammar.
Select File	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Second debating and voting stage. ● Another opportunity for amending, and compromising. ● Bills can be indefinitely postponed or advanced to the next stage. ● After this stage, bills are sent to Enrollment and Review again to be rechecked, then are reprinted for Final Reading.

Final Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Before they are passed, all bills have to be read aloud in their entirety by the Clerk of the Legislature, unless 30 members vote to skip this step.● Cannot be amended or debated at this stage, but can be sent back to Select File for an amendment.● A bill cannot be voted on until at least five legislative days after the bill is introduced, and one day after placed on Final Reading.
Governor	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● After the bill passes the Legislature, it goes to the Governor.● If the Governor signs it or does nothing, it becomes a law.● Governor may also veto the bill.● The Legislature may override a veto with 30 votes.