

Who's who in the Crown Court

The **usher** wears a black gown. They are responsible for preparing the court and making sure that everything is in the right place at the right time and that everybody involved in the hearing is there.

The **defendant** is the person who has been accused of the offence. The defendant sits in the dock and sometimes a uniformed officer sits near to them.

The **defence lawyer or barrister** will help the defendant. In a trial they act on the defendant's instructions by asking the witnesses questions and presenting the defendant's point of view to try and show that the defendant did not break the law. Sometimes a defendant will represent themselves.

The **prosecutor** is a lawyer who presents the case fairly against the defendant. They do this by presenting evidence and asking the witnesses questions about what they saw or heard, or what happened to them. They often challenge the defence witnesses. If the defendant gives evidence, the prosecutor will ask them questions to challenge their version of events.

The **witness** answers questions from the witness box. Most young or vulnerable witnesses give evidence using a TV link from another room in the court building or from a different court.

A **witness supporter** may be able to sit with a young witness while they are giving evidence.

The **judge** wears a traditional wig and gown, and is in charge of how the trial will run.

The **clerk** wears a black gown with a white collar and tabs. They sit at the front of the court and prepare the laptops/screens that are used to present evidence. They also swear in the jury and take pleas from the defendants.

The **jury** is made up of 12 people who know nothing about the trial. It is their job to listen to all the witnesses and then decide whether or not the defendant is guilty or has broken the law.

The Crown Court is usually open to the **public**. People can sit quietly and listen at the back of the court.