



HISTORY

Year 9

Women's Suffrage

Traditionally, men and women had different roles in life. Men were more likely to have an education, earn money and participate in the wider world, whereas women were expected to look after the family and home. Women's rights were very limited in every aspect of life.

Voting is your chance to have a say on the laws of your country. It is a way of making your voice heard. For women in particular, voting is an important step towards greater equality with men. There's no guarantee that the candidate you vote for will win the election, but at least you'll have tried. If you can't vote, it's harder to have your opinions taken seriously by people in government. Elected officials generally pay more attention to people who can vote than those who can't vote at all. That's why the right to vote is so important.



Key Words	
Cat and Mouse Act	Permitted suffragettes on hunger strike to be released, but re-arrested once well again to complete their sentences.
Arson	The act of deliberately setting fire to property with a view to causing extensive damage.
Constitutional	A peaceful, legal way of campaigning, often using recognised 'political' methods, such as petitions.
Enfranchisement	To be granted the vote or the state of having the vote.
Manifesto	A public declaration or proclamation, stating the aims and methods of a campaign group.
Militant	Aggressive and violent behaviour in pursuit of a political cause, favouring extreme or confrontational campaign methods.
Force feeding	Imprisoned suffragettes on hunger strike were sometimes force fed. Being force fed involved a rubber tube being inserted into the throat or nose and liquidised food being poured in.
Hunger strike	Some imprisoned suffragettes went on hunger strike, to further raise awareness for their cause.
NUWSS	The National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies (NUWSS) was formed in 1897 and brought together many smaller suffrage organisations. The NUWSS's method was non-confrontational and constitutional.
Representation of the People Act	In 1918, the Representation of the People Act granted the vote to women over 30 who were also householders, the wives of householders, owners of property worth over £5 or university graduates. The Act also granted the franchise to all men over the age of 21.
Suffragette	A campaigner for women's suffrage, willing to undertake militant action or to break the law.
Suffragist	A campaigner for women's suffrage who believes in constitutional methods of campaigning.
Petition	A formal written request or application, especially one signed by many people, to a particular individual or group, for example, a government.

Key People

<p>Emmeline Pankhurst – WSPU</p>	<p>Led the WSPU from October 1903. Took more militant action, such as windows smashing, arson and hunger strikes. Arrested numerous times, went on hunger strike and was force fed. Died in 1928.</p>
<p>Christabel Pankhurst - WSPU</p>	<p>Became a speaker for the WSPU in 1905. She trained as a lawyer but could not practice as a woman. Arrested with her mother. Fled England in 1912 for fear of being arrested again. Unsuccessfully ran for Parliament in 1918.</p>
<p>Emily Wilding Davison - WSPU</p>	<p>Joined WSPU in 1906. 3 years later, left job as a teacher and became a suffragette full time. Frequently arrested for number of crimes including setting fire to post box. By 1911, become increasingly militant.</p>
<p>Millicent Fawcett - NUWSS</p>	<p>Leading suffragist and led NUWSS from 1897-1919. Played a key role in getting women the vote. Dedicated to using constitutional means, and argued that militancy was counterproductive.</p>

Key Dates

<p>1897</p>	<p>NUWSS formed. Millicent Fawcett is leader.</p>
<p>1903</p>	<p>WSPU is formed by Emmeline Pankhurst and daughters.</p>
<p>1905</p>	<p>Militant Campaign begins – Christabel Pankhurst and Annie Kenney arrested.</p>
<p>1908</p>	<p>Mass rally in London – 300,000 to 500,000 activists attend. Window smashing using stones with written pleas on them.</p>
<p>1909</p>	<p>Hunger strike and force feeding starts – Marian Wallace Dunlop becomes the first hunger striker.</p>
<p>1913</p>	<p>Militant bomb and arson campaigns and increasing arrests which results in the passing of the “Cat and Mouse” Act, under which hunger strikers are temporarily released, then rearrested to prevent them dying in police custody.</p>
<p>1913</p>	<p>Emily Wilding Davison attempts to pin a Suffragette scarf onto the King’s Horse at the Derby. She is struck by the horse and dies 4 days later.</p>
<p>1914</p>	<p>World War 1 starts – Suffragette leaders urge women to join the war effort. NUWSS continues to campaign for recognition for their work.</p>
<p>1918</p>	<p>The Representation of the People Act is passed, allowing men over 21 and women over 30 to vote.</p>

In 1897 the NUWSS (Suffragists) was set up in Britain by Millicent Garrett Fawcett. Their policy was to be persistent but peaceful. The Suffragists presented more petitions to parliament and held marches and public meetings to spread the word. Women were getting impatient for the vote, leading to the creation of the WSPU in 1903 by Emmeline and Christabel Pankhurst. They were known as Suffragettes and their motto was “Deeds not Words”. They held huge rallies and caused uproar at political meetings, to bring attention to their cause. They became increasingly militant in their tactics, some historians even label the WSPU as terrorists. The Suffragettes took drastic actions such as hunger strikes while in prison, setting fires to property and slashing paintings in galleries. The vote was granted in 1918 to women over 30 who owned property. Equal enfranchisement was granted in 1928 to women over 21.

