



KNOW YOUR RIGHTS Protesters' Rights

The First Amendment protects your right to assemble and express your views through protest. However, police and other government officials are allowed to place certain narrow restrictions on the exercise of speech rights. Make sure you're prepared by brushing up on your rights before heading out into the streets.

Español

I want to take pictures or shoot video at a protest

Your rights

<https://www.aclu.org/know-your-rights/protesters-rights/>

- When you can, write down everything you remember, including the officers' badge and patrol car numbers and the agency they work for.
- Get contact information for witnesses.
- Take photographs of any injuries.
- Once you have all of this information, you can file a written complaint with the agency's internal affairs division or civilian complaint board.

What to do if you are stopped or detained for taking photographs

- Always remain calm and never physically resist a police officer.
- Police cannot detain you without reasonable suspicion that you have or are about to commit a crime or are in the process of doing so.
- If you are stopped, ask the officer if you are free to leave. If the answer is yes, calmly walk away.
- If you are detained, ask the officer what crime you are suspected of committing, and remind the officer that taking photographs is your right under the First Amendment and does not constitute reasonable suspicion of criminal activity.

What to do if you believe your rights have been violated

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- When you are lawfully present in any public space, you have the right to photograph anything in plain view, including federal buildings and the police. (On private property, the owner may set rules about photography or video.)
- Police officers may not confiscate or demand to view your photographs or video without a warrant, nor may they delete data under any circumstances. However, they may order citizens to cease activities that are truly interfering with legitimate law enforcement operations.
- If you are videotaping, be aware that there is an important legal distinction between a visual photographic record (fully protected) and the audio portion of a videotape, which some states have tried to regulate under state wiretapping laws.