What is the Avvo Rating?

The Avvo Rating is our effort to evaluate a lawyer's background, based on the information we know about the lawyer. The rating is calculated using a mathematical model that considers the information shown in a lawyer's profile, including a lawyer's years in practice, disciplinary history, professional achievements and industry recognition - all factors that, in our opinion, are relevant to assessing a lawyer's qualifications.

For some lawyers, the only information we have been able to collect is the publicly available information from state bar associations or other organizations that license lawyers. If that is all we have, then we display an Avvo Rating for the lawyer of either "Attention" or "No Concern." We display the "Attention" rating if there is information in the licensing records that, in our opinion, you should pay attention to, such as a disciplinary action against a lawyer without offsetting positive information. Otherwise, we display the "No Concern" rating.

We periodically collect background data from multiple sources, including state bar associations, court records, lawyer websites, and information that lawyers choose to provide to Avvo. Please keep in mind that we are not able to collect every piece of information about every lawyer's background. Information that we do not have could very well change the lawyer's Avvo Rating. So whether you see the numerical or the basic Avvo Rating, you should do further research regarding the lawyer to collect all relevant information regarding the lawyer's background.

Here's why the Avvo Rating can help you find the right lawyer:

- **It's unbiased.** Because ratings are calculated using a mathematical model, all lawyers are rated by the same standards.

- **There's no favoritism.** Here at Avvo, all lawyers are treated equally. They can't pay to change their ratings, and we don't play favorites to lawyers we know.

- **It's developed by legal experts for non-experts.** The model used to calculate the Avvo Rating was developed with input from hundreds of attorneys, thousands of consumers, and legal experts.

- **It's easy to understand.** With simple ratings from 1 to 10 or "Attention" and "No Concern," we hope to make clearer the murky process of understanding lawyers' backgrounds.

But keep in mind that the Avvo Rating is not intended to be the only thing you use in choosing a lawyer. It is only one tool and it is our effort to provide a snapshot evaluation of the lawyer's background, so that you can more effectively compare the available background information of different lawyers. Also keep in mind that the Avvo Rating is based only on the information we have collected about a lawyer, and our opinion is based on that information. That is one reason we also provide a forum for both clients and other lawyers to offer their own opinions about a lawyer. Although those opinions may not be perfect either, they at least give you different sources to get started.

And of course, Avvo's mathematical model has not met the lawyer in person. Because of this, our system can't measure subjective factors like personality and communication style. Also, because we don't believe there is yet an accurate way to score it, the Avvo Rating does not take into account a lawyer's performance on particular cases or matters.

In short, we are not saying that the Avvo Rating, or the information within a lawyer's profile, is all you need to know to choose the right lawyer. It is not. It is only one of several tools you should use to choose the right lawyer for you.

What are the levels on the numerical Avvo Rating?

- 9.0-10.0 Superb
- 8.0-8.9 Excellent
- 7.0-7.9 Very good
- 6.0-6.9 Good
- 5.0-5.9 Average
- 4.0-4.9 Concern
- 3.0-3.9 Caution
- 2.0-2.9 Strong caution
- 1.0-1.9 Extreme caution

Keep in mind that these ratings speak to a lawyer's background. They do not evaluate a lawyer's actual knowledge of the law, past performance in individual matters, personality or communication skills. These are items that the Avvo Rating cannot evaluate.

Frequently asked questions about the Avvo Rating

How does Avvo calculate the Avvo Rating?

We calculate the Avvo Rating based on background data we've collected on each lawyer. That data may come from various sources, including public records (such as the state bar associations, regulatory agencies, and court records), published sources on the Internet (including lawyers' websites), and information that lawyers choose to supply to Avvo. This information is then considered and weighted by our mathematical model to arrive at a numerical rating from 1 – 10 or, if we only have licensing records for an attorney, a rating of "Attention" or "No Concern." The Avvo Rating takes into account factors that we believe are relevant to an assessment of a

lawyer's qualifications, including the attorney's experience, professional achievements, and disciplinary sanctions.

What information does the Avvo Rating consider?

You can see the information the Avvo Rating considers: It is displayed in a lawyer's profile. However, we are not able to collect every piece of information about every lawyer's background. If there is information about a lawyer's background that we do not have, then that information could very well change the lawyer's Avvo Rating.

To calculate the Avvo Rating, we assign different weights to the information in a lawyer's profile. These weights reflect our opinion as to the significance of the different information in a lawyer's profile. We believe that some things are more important than others when considering a lawyer's qualifications, and our rating system reflects those judgments. The weightings are informed by our extensive research and legal expertise, but they are ultimately opinions. For instance, we believe the fact that a lawyer has been disciplined by a state bar association for a violation of the rules of ethics is significant regardless of the reason for the sanction or its severity, and the Avvo Rating reflects this.

Do you publish the details of how the Avvo Rating is calculated?

The Avvo Rating is based on all of the background information in a lawyer's profile. However, we do not disclose how we weigh this information, primarily because we don't want anyone gaming the Avvo Rating system. Much as Google doesn't share its search engine secrets, we don't share the inner-workings of the Avvo Rating so that we can maintain the integrity of the Avvo Rating.

Source: Avvo.com