

How do I get ready for the trial?

Make some notes to yourself about the main points to make when it is your turn to talk at the small claims trial. If you are the plaintiff, you should summarize your case, explain why the defendant should be responsible for paying you money, and explain how you calculated the specific amount you requested. If you are the defendant, you should explain why you feel you are not responsible to pay for the damages the plaintiff is requesting or why the amount they are requesting is wrong.

How do I present evidence at the trial?

1. **Audio/video:** You must bring a copy of the audio/video on a USB or CD AND bring a device to play the audio/video. The Court is not permitted to play an outside memory device, as the device may have a virus. If you want to play the audio/video from your phone, the Court will retain your phone for 30 days, which is the time period for a party to appeal the Court's decision. In place of having you play certain messages, the judge may just ask you to testify about what the messages or audio says.
2. **Text/Instagram/Facebook messages:**
You must print out a copy of the messages you want the Court to see. You must also provide a copy for the other side. The Court Clerks do not make copies for parties.
3. **Any documents:**
You must print out a copy of any documents you want the Court to see. You must also provide a copy for the other side. The Court Clerks do not make copies for parties.
4. **Statements of other people/witnesses:**
Any witnesses you have must attend the trial with you. Witnesses can also file a written sworn statement describing what they saw or heard. The written statement needs to have this statement at the bottom:

"I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the state of Washington that the facts I have provided on this form (and any attachments) are true."

The declaration then needs to be signed by the person making the declaration with the date it is signed and the city and state where it is signed.

Do not file evidence in advance with the court. You must bring all the evidence you intend to use to trial. However, you must exchange evidence with the other party 14 days in advance. Failure to do so may result in a continuance of the trial to another date or the exclusion of evidence.