



Amnesty International

RESOURCE SHEET 2 (v1)

Why the Human Rights Act matters

The Human Rights Act is a powerful tool. It brings home fundamental, universal rights we all have as human beings, and allows us to challenge authorities if they violate them.

If you're lucky you won't ever need to use it in a court. But it's protecting you all the same.

It's an invisible safety net for all of us, working silently to ensure our rights are respected, and a crucial shield and sword for the most vulnerable: from women fleeing domestic violence to older people in care homes and the disabled seeking proper support.

Right now this vital protection is at risk.

Attacked by some politicians, misrepresented by the press and misunderstood by many – it's time to spread the message that human rights matter.

OUR HARD-WON RIGHTS

Over the centuries, ordinary British people have fought and died for the rights we enjoy today. From helping victims of domestic abuse, to protecting confidential communications between lawyers and their clients – the Human Rights Act helps us to fight injustice and incompetence in the UK and hold those in power to account.

It's been used to make sure elderly couples wanting to stay together after decades of marriage are able to. And it's been used by disabled people whose right to dignity has been violated.

We must not let politicians take away these universal rights at the stroke of a pen. As always, it's the most vulnerable who'll pay the heaviest price.

FIGHTING FOR JUSTICE AROUND THE WORLD

In the UK, we enjoy fundamental freedoms that people are still fighting for around the world.

People like Raif Badawi. Raif is currently facing 950 lashes and a ten-year prison sentence in Saudi Arabia – simply for blogging about free speech, a freedom we take for granted here in Britain.

We can't take a tough stance against the world's dictators, torturers and tyrants if we turn our backs on human rights at home.