Franchise timeline

Pre-European settlement	Prior to European settlement Australia was occupied by groups of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people led by elders and subject to traditional laws. These groups governed themselves through a corporate decision-making process. *Acknowledge the rule of law pre-European settlement before starting the timeline.*
European settlement prior to 1843	Autocratic government *New South Wales was a British penal colony with a governor appointed by the Crown who made all decisions concerning the policies and laws of the colony, both for convicts and free settlers.*
1843	Only men who owned or paid rent on property could vote. *Most men, all women and Indigenous Australians could not vote.*
1856	The right to vote in South Australia was granted to males 21 years of age or over.
1857	The right to vote in Victoria was granted to all males 21 years of age or over. *This was the time of the gold rush in Victoria. There were many people from around the world living there – Chinese, Americans, Europeans – and many had settled permanently, but they had no right to vote.*
1858	The right to vote was granted in New South Wales to all males 21 years of age or over.
1872	The right to vote in Queensland was granted to all males 21 years of age or over. *Remind students that Australia was six independent colonies at this time with separate laws and policies, including franchise laws.*
1893	The right to vote in Western Australia was granted to all males 21 years of age or over.
1895	Women 21 years or over were given the right to vote in South Australia. *This was the first time in Australia's European history that women could vote – it was one of the first places in the world to give women the vote.*
1896	The right to vote in Tasmania was granted to all males 21 years of age or over.
1899	Women 21 years or over were given the right to vote in Western Australia.
1901	The first federal elections were held under state legislation – state franchises applied. *This meant that the only people allowed to vote in the first federal elections were men 21 years or over from NSW, Vic, Qld, Tas, SA and WA; and women from SA and WA. How many people are still not included on the timeline?*
1902	Universal suffrage at federal elections (most men and women over 21) *but there were some exceptions.* *Indigenous Australians and natives of Asia, Africa and the Pacific Islands (except New Zealand) were excluded from enrolment and voting unless they had the franchise at state level. Australia at this time thought of itself as a 'white' society, still a British society.* Women over 21 were given the right to vote in New South Wales state elections.
1903	Women over 21 were given the right to vote in Tasmanian state elections.
1905	Women over 21 were given the right to vote in Queensland state elections.
1908	Women over 21 were given the right to vote in Victorian state elections.
1949	Indigenous Australians, as long as they had the right to enrol at State elections (NSW, SA, Vic, Tas) or had served in the defence forces, were given the right to vote in federal elections. *Many Indigenous Australians served during WWII. Indigenous Australians in Qld, WA and NT were still not able to vote, unless they had served in the defence forces.*
1962	Indigenous Australians were entitled to enrol and vote at federal elections and referendums. *Voluntary, not compulsory enrolment and voting.*
1973	Franchise was lowered from 21 to 18 years of age.
1984	Compulsory enrolment and voting for Indigenous Australians. Franchise qualification changed to Australian citizenship.

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