

EVERY LAW IN HERE IS REAL

TOTALLY ILLEGAL

The Craziest Laws from Around the World



THE ROBOT BOOK CLUB

Totally Illegal

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THE ROBOT BOOK CLUB

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Every law in this book was verified against a named statute, ordinance, or regulation, or a credible news report of real enforcement. Citations for every law are in the back. Laws change; if you plan to walk a crocodile down Main Street, check with a grown-up lawyer first.

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Court Is Now in Session

This book contains 40 laws that sound completely made up. They are not. Every single one is real — written into an actual statute, ordinance, or regulation, or enforced for real and reported by the news. The receipts are in the back of the book.

Each law gets a page: the law itself, where it applies, and the best part — **why on earth it exists**. Because every strange law has a story, and the story usually involves someone who ruined it for everybody.

STILL ON THE BOOKS — you could technically be cited for this today.

TECHNICALLY ENFORCEABLE — real law, but good luck finding an officer who bothers.

REPEALED — it finally got deleted, but it was real for years.

TROUBLE-O-METER — one skull means nobody has been fined in a century; five skulls means the police genuinely check.

At the end of every chapter: **Myth or Law?** Three suspects, but only two are real laws — the third is a famous fake that the internet keeps repeating. Answers (with the evidence) are in the back. No peeking. We will know.

CHAPTER 1

North America

The land of the free is also the land of the very, very specific rule. City councils here will outlaw almost anything at least once — and the paperwork never dies.

8 REAL LAWS · 1 IMPOSTOR AT THE END

GAINESVILLE, GEORGIA, USA

It is completely illegal to eat fried chicken with a knife, fork, or any other utensil; you must eat it with your bare hands.

TECHNICALLY ENFORCEABLE

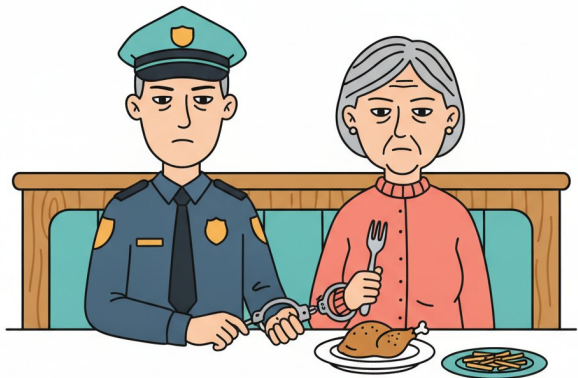
TROUBLE-O-METER



A 91-year-old was mock-arrested as a practical joke in 2009.

Why Is This a Law?

In 1961, the city declared itself the poultry capital of the world. Lawmakers passed this eccentric publicity stunt to honor their billion-dollar chicken agriculture industry.



SEVERANCE, COLORADO, USA

It is strictly forbidden to throw snowballs anywhere within the town limits.

REPEALED 2018

TROUBLE-O-METER     *A nine-year-old boy convinced the town to repeal it in 2018.*

Why Is This a Law?

In 1920, the town banned throwing any missiles at people, animals, or buildings to prevent vandalism. Because a snowball qualified as a missile, generations of children were technically breaking the law.



CARMEL-BY-THE-SEA, CALIFORNIA, USA

You cannot wear shoes with heels taller than two inches or with a base smaller than one square inch without an official permit.

TECHNICALLY ENFORCEABLE

TROUBLE-O-METER



Tourists now visit City Hall just to get free permit souvenirs.

Why Is This a Law?

In the 1960s, tree roots grew under the sidewalks, making the pavement extremely uneven. The city wrote this law to prevent lawsuits from people tripping in stiletto heels.



ARKANSAS, USA

The state's name must legally be pronounced in three syllables, with a silent final "s" and the accent on the first and last syllables.

STILL ON THE BOOKS

TROUBLE-O-METER



You won't go to jail, but it is banned in official proceedings.

Why Is This a Law?

The state's name comes from a Native American tribe, but French explorers added a plural "s." In 1881, the legislature legally mandated the French pronunciation to end a bitter feud between two senators.



CANADA

It is a criminal offense to fraudulently pretend to use witchcraft, sorcery, enchantment, or conjuration to solve problems.

REPEALED 2018

TROUBLE-O-METER ☠️ ☠️ ☠️ ☠️ ☠️

Police charged a self-proclaimed witch two days before the law was repealed.

Why Is This a Law?

Dating back to 1892, this was an early anti-scam law. It was designed to stop con artists from tricking frightened people into paying them money to lift fake curses.



ALBERTA, CANADA

A person must not paint a wooden ladder, though they are allowed to coat it in a clear protective varnish.

STILL ON THE BOOKS

TROUBLE-O-METER     

Workplace inspectors actively enforce this on construction sites to prevent falls.

Why Is This a Law?

This is a brilliant workplace safety regulation. Paint is opaque and would hide dangerous cracks or rot in the wood, causing a worker to climb a broken ladder and fall.



MEXICO CITY, MEXICO

Depending on the last digit of your car's license plate, there is one specific day every week where it is illegal to drive it.

STILL ON THE BOOKS

TROUBLE-O-METER



Highly enforced with expensive fines and immediate vehicle impoundment.

Why Is This a Law?

Mexico City sits in a high-altitude valley that traps air pollution. In 1989, smog became so toxic the government restricted driving to instantly remove twenty percent of exhaust fumes.



CANADA

A cashier can legally refuse your payment if you try to use too many coins in a single transaction.

STILL ON THE BOOKS

TROUBLE-O-METER 🧠 🧠 🧠 🧠 🧠

Retailers regularly invoke this to reject garbage bags full of loose change.

Why Is This a Law?

This law exists to keep the economy moving. It stops angry people from holding up store lines by paying large bills entirely in pocket change.



MYTH OR LAW?

The North America Challenge

You've survived the weirdest rules North America has to offer, but your final test is to spot a total fake. Two of the laws below are absolutely real, while one is a massive internet lie. Trust your instincts and see if you can catch the imposter!

- A** You are strictly forbidden from painting a wooden ladder, though you may coat it in a clear protective varnish.
- B** In California, it is strictly illegal to eat a fresh orange while you are actively taking a bath.
- C** Cashiers in Canada can legally refuse your payment if you attempt to use too many coins in a single transaction.

Two of these are real, citable laws. One is a famous fake. Verdicts — with the evidence — are in the back of the book. No peeking: chapter 1 is watching.

CHAPTER 2

Europe

Centuries of kings, empires, and extremely dedicated clerks left Europe with rule books thicker than castle walls. Some of those rules never got deleted.

8 REAL LAWS · 1 IMPOSTOR AT THE END

UNITED KINGDOM

It is a criminal offense to handle a salmon in suspicious circumstances.

STILL ON THE BOOKS

TROUBLE-O-METER     

Rural police use it to bust illegal fish poaching syndicates.

Why Is This a Law?

This law was designed to combat illegal poaching and underground fish-smuggling rings. By making it illegal to handle poached fish, police could arrest black-market smugglers.



SWITZERLAND

It is completely illegal to own just one guinea pig because they get too lonely; they must live in pairs or groups.

STILL ON THE BOOKS

TROUBLE-O-METER



Inspectors can issue fines or confiscate the lonely pet.

Why Is This a Law?

Scientists proved that guinea pigs are highly social herd animals that suffer severe psychological stress when kept alone. Recognizing their emotional needs, the government mandated they must live with companions.



GERMANY

It is illegal to stop your car on the highway just because you ran out of gas.

STILL ON THE BOOKS

TROUBLE-O-METER *Highway police routinely issue fines from €30 to €105.*

Why Is This a Law?

The German Autobahn features stretches of road with no speed limits, making stopping incredibly dangerous. Running out of fuel is considered a completely preventable human error.



LONDON, ENGLAND

It is strictly forbidden to wear a full suit of armor inside the Houses of Parliament.

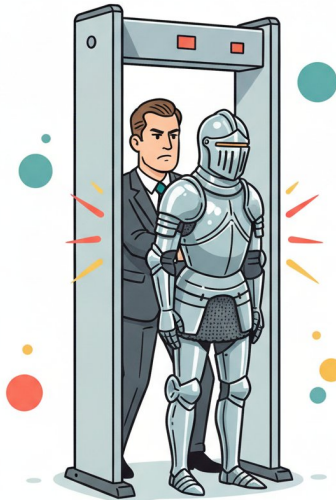
TECHNICALLY ENFORCEABLE

TROUBLE-O-METER

*Modern police would just stop you at the door.*

Why Is This a Law?

In 1313, furious noblemen kept showing up to Parliament wearing battle armor and carrying swords to intimidate King Edward II. To stop the bullying, the King banned armor in parliament.



CHÂTEAUNEUF-DU-PAPE, FRANCE

The flying over, landing, or taking off of flying saucers is strictly forbidden, and any alien craft will be impounded.

STILL ON THE BOOKS

TROUBLE-O-METER



No aliens have ever been arrested or fined yet.

Why Is This a Law?

During a 1954 wave of UFO hysteria, the local mayor realized a ban would get free global advertising for his town's wine. He wrote a serious-sounding anti-UFO law, and journalists flocked there.



VENICE, ITALY

It is illegal to sell birdseed to or feed the pigeons in St. Mark's Square.

STILL ON THE BOOKS

TROUBLE-O-METER



Local inspectors hand out on-the-spot fines up to €700.

Why Is This a Law?

The city's massive pigeon population was pecking at microscopic gaps in ancient statues to find crumbs. Their highly acidic droppings were severely eroding priceless marble, costing taxpayers millions.



ERACLEA, ITALY

It is completely illegal to build sandcastles or dig deep holes on the public beaches.

STILL ON THE BOOKS

TROUBLE-O-METER



Police issue fines ranging from €100 to €250 for sand architecture.

Why Is This a Law?

Giant sand structures and abandoned deep holes create severe safety hazards on crowded beaches. They block emergency rescue workers, cause tripped ankles, and stop night-time beach cleaning tractors from operating safely.



BARCELONA, SPAIN

It is illegal to walk on the city streets wearing only swimwear or going bare-chested outside of the immediate beach area.

STILL ON THE BOOKS

TROUBLE-O-METER



Tourists refusing to put on shirts face fines up to €300.

Why Is This a Law?

Millions of tourists began treating the historic metropolis like a giant resort, wandering into banks and cathedrals in wet swimsuits. Fed up with the disrespect, the city mandated real clothes off the sand.



MYTH OR LAW?

The Europe Challenge

You have toured the continent, but can you spot the fake among the facts? Two of these European laws are totally real, while one is a legendary internet fib. See if you can sniff out the imposter!

- A** It is strictly illegal to own a single guinea pig, as they must be kept in pairs or groups.
- B** It is completely illegal in France to name a pet pig Napoleon out of respect for the former emperor.
- C** It is a traffic offense to stop your vehicle on the highway just because you ran out of gas.

Two of these are real, citable laws. One is a famous fake. Verdicts — with the evidence — are in the back of the book. No peeking: chapter 2 is watching.

CHAPTER 3

Asia & Oceania

From megacities with rules about chewing gum to islands with rules about nearly everything else, this half of the world takes its details very seriously.

8 REAL LAWS · 1 IMPOSTOR AT THE END

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

It is illegal to possess 50 kilograms or more of potatoes unless you are an authorized agent of the Potato Corporation.

REPEALED 2021

TROUBLE-O-METER



Potato smugglers faced massive fines and vehicle searches.

Why Is This a Law?

Following World War II, the government wanted to ensure a steady food supply and protect small farmers. They created a corporation to strictly control every potato grown and sold in the state.



VICTORIA, AUSTRALIA

It is completely illegal to correspond with, or engage in any kind of business with, a pirate.

STILL ON THE BOOKS

TROUBLE-O-METER



Modern convictions are completely non-existent.

Why Is This a Law?

This is a holdover from an era when maritime security was a massive global concern. To prevent locals from laundering stolen treasure or hiding ships, the government made it a severe crime to even send pirates a letter.



SOUTH AUSTRALIA

It is a legal offense to ring another home's doorbell or knock on their door without a reasonable excuse.

STILL ON THE BOOKS

TROUBLE-O-METER



Malicious pranksters can face a maximum fine of \$250.

Why Is This a Law?

This law was designed to combat neighborhood nuisances and the classic childhood prank known as ding-dong-ditch. It ensures that people have a legitimate right to peace and quiet inside their own homes.



SINGAPORE

The importation of any chewing gum into the country is strictly prohibited, with only minor exceptions for dental gum.

STILL ON THE BOOKS

TROUBLE-O-METER 🐼 🐼 🐼 🐼 🐼

Confiscation and severe fines are famously enforced on travelers.

Why Is This a Law?

In the 1980s, vandals began sticking chewed gum onto the door sensors of the brand-new subway trains, causing massive delays. The government solved the hygiene problem by banning gum entirely.



SINGAPORE

It is illegal to intentionally feed pigeons or other wildlife in public spaces without written government approval.

STILL ON THE BOOKS

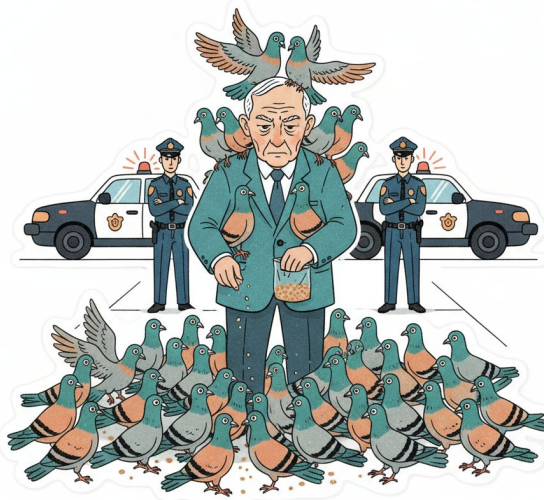
TROUBLE-O-METER



Repeat wildlife feeders can face astounding fines up to \$20,000.

Why Is This a Law?

Mercy feeding by well-meaning citizens caused the population of invasive rock pigeons to explode. To protect public hygiene from highly acidic, disease-ridden droppings, the government made tossing bread to birds a serious offense.



THAILAND

It is a serious criminal offense to step on any Thai currency, whether it is a coin or a paper note.

STILL ON THE BOOKS

TROUBLE-O-METER



Insulting the monarchy carries prison sentences of up to 15 years.

Why Is This a Law?

In Thai culture, the feet are considered the lowest part of the body, while the head is the most sacred. Because all currency features the revered King's portrait, stepping on his face is viewed as a profound, intentional insult.



THAILAND

It is illegal to drive a motorized vehicle, including cars and rented scooters, without wearing a shirt.

STILL ON THE BOOKS

TROUBLE-O-METER



Traffic police routinely pull over tourists and hand out fines.

Why Is This a Law?

Despite the sweltering tropical heat, local culture places a high value on polite dress and modesty in public spaces. The government passed this law to stop shirtless tourists from treating the roads like a giant beach party.



NEW ZEALAND

It is entirely illegal for any nuclear-powered ship to enter the country's waters.

STILL ON THE BOOKS

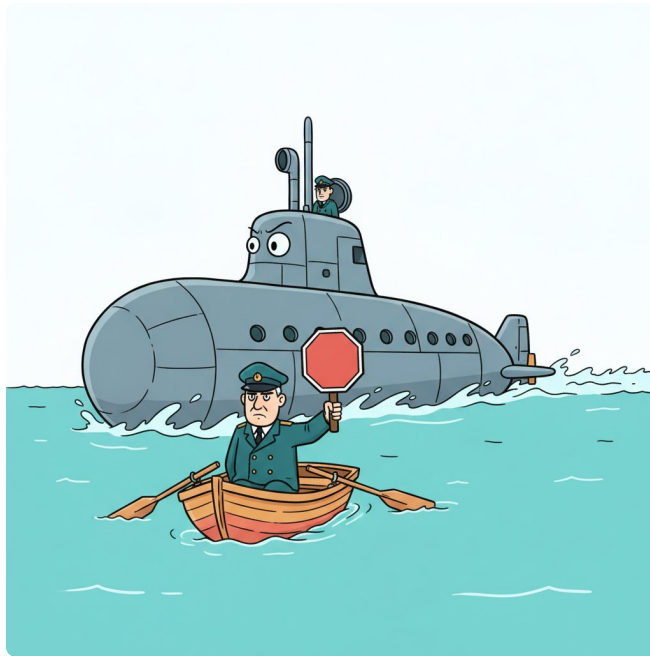
TROUBLE-O-METER



The country successfully banned United States Navy ships for decades.

Why Is This a Law?

During the Cold War, citizens grew terrified of the global arms race and the environmental effects of oceanic nuclear testing. Driven by massive public protests, the government established one of the strictest anti-nuclear laws in world history.



MYTH OR LAW?

The Asia & Oceania Challenge

You have toured the strict city-states, the colonial rulebooks, and the royal decrees of Asia and Oceania. Now it is time to put your legal radar to the test. Can you spot the fake statute hiding among the real ones?

- A** It is a severe criminal offense to send a letter to, or engage in any kind of business with, a pirate.
- B** It is a punishable criminal offense to step outside your house or hotel without wearing underwear.
- C** It is strictly prohibited to bring any chewing gum into the country unless it is for medical or dental reasons.

Two of these are real, citable laws. One is a famous fake. Verdicts — with the evidence — are in the back of the book. No peeking: chapter 3 is watching.

CHAPTER 4

Africa, the Middle East & South America

Three continents, thousands of jurisdictions, and some of the most wonderfully specific laws ever committed to paper.

8 REAL LAWS · 1 IMPOSTOR AT THE END

KENYA

It is completely illegal to manufacture, sell, or even carry a single-use plastic grocery bag.

STILL ON THE BOOKS

TROUBLE-O-METER 🧠 🧠 🧠 🧠 🧠

Punishments can reach up to 4 years in jail.

Why Is This a Law?

Plastic bags were severely polluting the landscape and harming wildlife, with cows frequently found with bags in their stomachs. The government enacted the world's strictest ban to solve this environmental crisis.



ROSARIO, ARGENTINA

Parents are legally banned from registering the name "Messi" as their newborn baby's first name.

STILL ON THE BOOKS

TROUBLE-O-METER



Registrars reject the paperwork until a new name is chosen.

Why Is This a Law?

After a father in another province named his son after soccer legend Lionel Messi, officials feared a massive wave of identical names. They proactively banned it to prevent total administrative chaos in the hometown.



BRAZIL

It is strictly forbidden for drivers to operate a fuel pump; all gasoline must be pumped by a professional attendant.

STILL ON THE BOOKS

TROUBLE-O-METER



Gas stations face severe fines for installing self-service pumps.

Why Is This a Law?

When automated self-service pumps spread globally in the 1990s, they threatened the livelihoods of hundreds of thousands of Brazilian gas station workers. The government banned the machines to protect these jobs.



BRAZIL

For people working the night shift, one legal hour is officially counted as exactly 52 minutes and 30 seconds.

STILL ON THE BOOKS

TROUBLE-O-METER



Companies are routinely taken to labor courts for miscalculating this.

Why Is This a Law?

In 1943, the government recognized that working in the middle of the night is physically harder than daytime work. By shortening the legal hour, night workers reach their overtime pay much faster.



SOUTH AFRICA

Herders and their livestock, like cows and goats, have the absolute right of way on public roads over all motor vehicles.

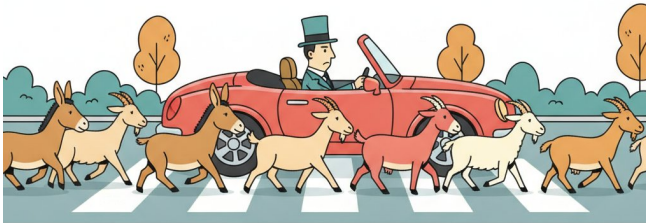
TECHNICALLY ENFORCEABLE

TROUBLE-O-METER

*Drivers failing to yield can be charged with reckless driving.*

Why Is This a Law?

Vast rural spaces mean traditional livestock herding constantly intersects with modern asphalt highways. This law protects agricultural livelihoods from speeding drivers who might otherwise run animals off the road.



SOUTH AFRICA

It is entirely illegal to dye an animal's fur or feathers for decorative purposes.

STILL ON THE BOOKS

TROUBLE-O-METER



Animal welfare groups actively confiscate dyed pets and issue fines.

Why Is This a Law?

This law combats internet trends where people attempt to dye puppies or ducklings bright neon colors for fashion. It prevents chemical toxicity and severe harm to the animal's skin.



DUBAI, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

Leaving a highly unwashed, dirty car in a public parking space is an illegal offense.

STILL ON THE BOOKS

TROUBLE-O-METER



Cars not cleaned within 15 days are towed to a scrapyard.

Why Is This a Law?

Desert dust storms are frequent, but neglected cars tarnish the city's pristine, ultra-modern aesthetic. The government considers a heavily dirt-caked vehicle to be unacceptable visual pollution.



BOGOTÁ, COLOMBIA

Motorcyclists were legally required to print their vehicle's license plate number in giant reflective letters on the back of their safety helmets.

REPEALED 2022

TROUBLE-O-METER 

Police checkpoints actively fined thousands of non-compliant riders.

Why Is This a Law?

Implemented to combat drive-by crimes committed by riders whose faces were hidden by visors. Authorities needed a way to identify fleeing bikes on security cameras, effectively turning heads into license plates.



MYTH OR LAW?

The Africa, the Middle East & South America Challenge

You have seen some unbelievably bizarre rules across Africa, the Middle East, and South America, but can you spot a fake? Two of the laws below are completely real, while one is just a famous internet rumor. Can you guess which one is the myth?

- A** Witches are legally prohibited from flying their broomsticks higher than 150 meters in the air.
- B** It is a strict legal offense to dye an animal's fur or feathers bright colors for decorative fashion.
- C** Leaving an excessively dusty and unwashed car parked in any public space is a punishable offense.

Two of these are real, citable laws. One is a famous fake. Verdicts — with the evidence — are in the back of the book. No peeking: chapter 4 is watching.

CHAPTER 5

Laws About Animals

Most laws boss around people. These ones boss around donkeys, guinea pigs, kangaroos, and at least one extremely well-protected pigeon.

8 REAL LAWS · 1 IMPOSTOR AT THE END

ROME, ITALY

It is completely illegal to keep goldfish in round, spherical bowls or to give them away as fairground prizes.

STILL ON THE BOOKS

TROUBLE-O-METER



Fines were immediately enforced at local fairs and carnivals.

Why Is This a Law?

Animal rights experts explained that round fishbowls do not provide enough surface area for oxygen, slowly suffocating the fish. They also argued the curved glass causes fish to go blind. The city passed a sweeping statute to outlaw the classic bowl entirely.



QUITMAN, GEORGIA, USA

It is unlawful for anyone owning domestic fowl to allow their chickens, ducks, or geese to cross the road or run in the streets.

STILL ON THE BOOKS

TROUBLE-O-METER

*Rarely arrested, but police still use it for neighborhood disputes.*

Why Is This a Law?

As the town grew from a rural farming area into a populated city, loose farm animals became a major nuisance. Chickens blocking traffic or destroying gardens led the city to draft an ordinance holding owners strictly liable.



KINGMAN, ARIZONA, USA

It is illegal to allow a donkey to sleep in a bathtub.

STILL ON THE BOOKS

TROUBLE-O-METER



Never enforced today, as donkeys rarely encounter outdoor bathtubs.

Why Is This a Law?

In 1924, a local merchant allowed his donkey to sleep in an abandoned porcelain bathtub near a dry riverbed. A flash flood swept the makeshift boat miles downstream with the donkey trapped inside. After an exhausting rescue operation, the town council banned the practice.



UNITED KINGDOM

All whales, dolphins, and sturgeons caught within three miles of the coast or washed ashore are the personal property of the reigning monarch.

STILL ON THE BOOKS

TROUBLE-O-METER 🧠 🧠 🧠 🧠 🧠

You must officially offer the catch to the palace before keeping it.

Why Is This a Law?

In medieval England, these sea creatures were considered creatures of superior excellence, perfectly suited for the monarch's consumption. Historically, the King owned the head of the whale while the Queen took the tail for corset materials.



BRIOLLAY, FRANCE

Mosquitoes are officially outlawed and banned from entering the borders of the village.

TECHNICALLY ENFORCEABLE

TROUBLE-O-METER 🧠 🧠 🧠 🧠 🧠

Impossible to enforce on insects, though it calmed angry citizens.

Why Is This a Law?

Following severe river flooding in 2018, the village was subjected to an apocalyptic invasion of mosquitoes. Angry residents demanded action from the mayor, who drafted a theatrical decree banning the bugs to show he was listening but powerless to control nature.



NEW SOUTH WALES, AUSTRALIA

Members of the public are legally prohibited from holding, carrying, or supporting the physical weight of a koala.

STILL ON THE BOOKS

TROUBLE-O-METER 🐼 🐼 🐼 🐼 🐼

Zoos will instantly lose their operating licenses for allowing cuddling.

Why Is This a Law?

Koalas are solitary, low-energy marsupials that require up to twenty hours of sleep a day. Being constantly lifted and held by strangers causes extreme psychological stress. Animal welfare scientists successfully lobbied governments to ban tourist cuddling to protect the species.



POLAND

Any dog traveling outside a carrier on a national train must be kept on a leash and wear a muzzle for the entire journey.

STILL ON THE BOOKS

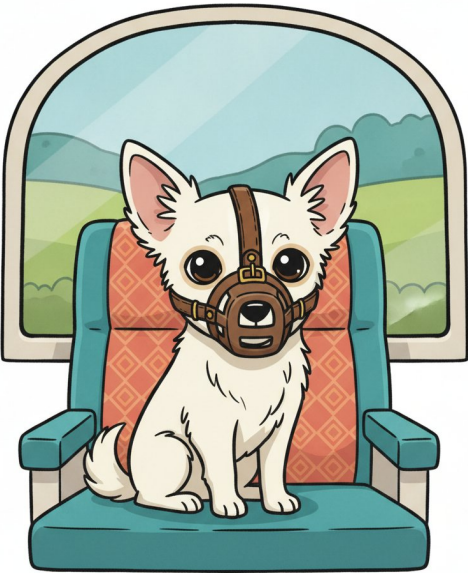
TROUBLE-O-METER



Conductors patrol aisles and issue immediate penalty fees to unmuzzled pets.

Why Is This a Law?

As pet travel skyrocketed in the country, authorities needed to balance the comfort of families with the safety of strangers in confined passenger cars. To prevent bites and disputes, a blanket muzzle rule was applied to all dogs regardless of size.



NORWAY

A specific king penguin holds an official, legally recognized military rank within the Armed Forces, requiring human soldiers to salute him.

STILL ON THE BOOKS

TROUBLE-O-METER 🧠 🧠 🧠 🧠 🧠

Failing to salute a superior officer is a serious military offense.

Why Is This a Law?

In 1972, a Norwegian lieutenant arranged for the King's Guard to adopt a penguin at the Edinburgh Zoo. Because strict military regulations require periodic promotions for longevity, the penguin and his successors have steadily climbed the military hierarchy over the decades.



MYTH OR LAW?

The Laws About Animals Challenge

You have just survived a wild tour of the world's strangest animal legislation, but can your legal radar spot a fake? Two of these laws are completely genuine, while one is a legendary internet rumor. Can you guess which of these animal rules is the myth?

- A** It is legally forbidden for mosquitoes to enter or fly within the official borders of the village.
- B** It is explicitly a crime to serve beer or any other alcoholic beverage to a moose within city limits.
- C** It is strictly unlawful for any citizen to allow a domestic donkey to sleep inside a bathtub.

Two of these are real, citable laws. One is a famous fake. Verdicts — with the evidence — are in the back of the book. No peeking: chapter 5 is watching.

The Answer Key & The Evidence

Verdicts for every Myth-or-Law challenge, plus the citation for every law in this book. If it's on a law page, it's on this list.

Chapter 1 • North America

MYTH OR LAW? — THE VERDICTS

A REAL LAW **You are strictly forbidden from painting a wooden ladder, though you may coat it in a clear protective varnish.** — This is a real workplace regulation from the Alberta Occupational Health and Safety Code, Part 8, ensuring paint doesn't hide dangerous cracked wood.

B BUSTED MYTH **In California, it is strictly illegal to eat a fresh orange while you are actively taking a bath.** — This is a famous fake that started when internet trolls mutated an actual California rule against eating on public transit into a ridiculous bathtub myth.

C REAL LAW **Cashiers in Canada can legally refuse your payment if you attempt to use too many coins in a single transaction.** — This is real and can be found in the Canada Currency Act of 1985, Section 8.2, which prevents people from purposely slowing down checkout lines.

THE EVIDENCE

No. 1 Gainesville, Georgia, USA — Gainesville City Ordinance (1961); 2009 Food Republic report (*technically enforceable*)

No. 2 Severance, Colorado, USA — Severance Municipal Code § 10-5-80 (repealed 2018) (*repealed 2018*)

No. 3 Carmel-by-the-Sea, California, USA — Carmel Municipal Code (passed 1963) (*technically enforceable*)

No. 4 Arkansas, USA — Arkansas Code Title 1, Chapter 4, Section 1-4-105 (*still on the books*)

No. 5 Canada — Criminal Code of Canada, Section 365 (*repealed 2018*)

No. 6 Alberta, Canada — Alberta Occupational Health and Safety Code, Part 8 (*still on the books*)

No. 7 Mexico City, Mexico — Hoy No Circula Environmental Program (1989) (*still on the books*)

No. 8 Canada — Canada Currency Act, Section 8.2 (1985) (*still on the books*)

Chapter 2 • Europe

MYTH OR LAW? — THE VERDICTS

A REAL LAW **It is strictly illegal to own a single guinea pig, as they must be kept in pairs or groups.** — This is a real law in Switzerland! To protect herd animals from loneliness, it was mandated by the Swiss Animal Protection Ordinance of 2008, Article 13.

B BUSTED MYTH **It is completely illegal in France to name a pet pig Napoleon out of respect for the former emperor.** — This is a famous fake! The myth actually started when a nervous French publisher voluntarily changed a dictator pig's name to Cesar in the 1947 translation of George Orwell's book *Animal Farm*.

C REAL LAW **It is a traffic offense to stop your vehicle on the highway just because you ran out of gas.** — This is a real law in Germany! It is enforced by the Straßenverkehrsordnung (StVO) sections 18 and 23, which classify an empty tank as a preventable human error.

THE EVIDENCE

No. 9 United Kingdom — The Salmon Act 1986, Section 32 (*still on the books*)

No. 10 Switzerland — Swiss Animal Protection Ordinance (2008), Art. 13 (*still on the books*)

No. 11 Germany — Straßenverkehrsordnung (StVO) § 18 and § 23 (*still on the books*)

No. 12 London, England — The Statute Forbidding Bearing of Armour 1313 (*technically enforceable*)

No. 13 Châteauneuf-du-Pape, France — 1954 Municipal Decree of Châteauneuf-du-Pape (*still on the books*)

No. 14 Venice, Italy — 2008 Venetian Mayoral Decree (*still on the books*)

No. 15 Eraclea, Italy — Eraclea Municipal Code / Coastal Bylaws (*still on the books*)

No. 16 Barcelona, Spain — Barcelona City Council Civil Conduct Bylaws (*still on the books*)

Chapter 3 · Asia & Oceania

MYTH OR LAW? — THE VERDICTS

A REAL LAW **It is a severe criminal offense to send a letter to, or engage in any kind of business with, a pirate.** — This is a real law in Victoria, Australia, found in the Crimes Act 1958 (Vic), Section 70C.

B BUSTED MYTH **It is a punishable criminal offense to step outside your house or hotel without wearing underwear.** — This is a famous fake travel myth about Thailand. It stems from a massive misunderstanding of their general public decency and modesty regulations.

C REAL LAW **It is strictly prohibited to bring any chewing gum into the country unless it is for medical or dental reasons.** — This is a real law in Singapore, officially listed under the Imports and Exports Regulations 1999, Section 3.

THE EVIDENCE

No. 17 Western Australia — Marketing of Potatoes Act 1946 (WA), Sec. 22 (*repealed 2021*)

No. 18 Victoria, Australia — Crimes Act 1958 (Vic), Sec. 70C (*still on the books*)

No. 19 South Australia — Summary Offences Act 1953 (SA), Sec. 50 (*still on the books*)

No. 20 Singapore — Imports and Exports Regulations 1999, Sec. 3 (*still on the books*)

No. 21 Singapore — Wildlife Act (Amended 2020) (*still on the books*)

No. 22 Thailand — Criminal Code of Thailand, Lese Majeste (*still on the books*)

No. 23 Thailand — Land Traffic Act B.E. 2522 (1979) (*still on the books*)

No. 24 New Zealand — New Zealand Nuclear Free Zone Act 1987 (*still on the books*)

Chapter 4 · Africa, the Middle East & South America

MYTH OR LAW? — THE VERDICTS

A BUSTED MYTH **Witches are legally prohibited from flying their broomsticks higher than 150 meters in the air.** — This is a famous fake from Eswatini, formerly Swaziland. A civil aviation official made a sarcastic joke about drone airspace limits applying to absolutely everything in the sky, and international reporters mistakenly published his joke as a literal law.

B REAL LAW **It is a strict legal offense to dye an animal's fur or feathers bright colors for decorative fashion.** — This is entirely true in South Africa to prevent chemical cruelty to pets. It is heavily enforced under the Animals Protection Act No. 71 of 1962.

C REAL LAW **Leaving an excessively dusty and unwashed car parked in any public space is a punishable offense.** — This is a real law in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, designed to prevent visual pollution in the luxury city. It is enforced under the Dubai Municipality Waste Management Regulations.

THE EVIDENCE

No. 25 Kenya — Environmental Management and Coordination Act (2017) (*still on the books*)

No. 26 Rosario, Argentina — Civil Register of Santa Fe Province Ruling (2014) (*still on the books*)

No. 27 Brazil — Federal Law No. 9,956 of 2000 (*still on the books*)

No. 28 Brazil — Consolidação das Leis do Trabalho, Article 73 (*still on the books*)

No. 29 South Africa — National Road Traffic Act 93 of 1996 (*technically enforceable*)

No. 30 South Africa — Animals Protection Act No. 71 of 1962 (*still on the books*)

No. 31 Dubai, United Arab Emirates — Dubai Municipality Waste Management Regulations (*still on the books*)

No. 32 Bogotá, Colombia — Bogotá Decree 119 of 2022 (*repealed 2022*)

Chapter 5 · Laws About Animals

MYTH OR LAW? — THE VERDICTS

A REAL LAW **It is legally forbidden for mosquitoes to enter or fly within the official borders of the village.** — This is a real law from Briollay, France, enacted via a Mayoral Decree by Mayor André Marchand in July 2018.

B BUSTED MYTH **It is explicitly a crime to serve beer or any other alcoholic beverage to a moose within city limits.** — This is a famous fake! There is no such Alaskan law, but the legend was inspired by real moose occasionally gorging on fermented apples and stumbling around drunk.

C REAL LAW **It is strictly unlawful for any citizen to allow a domestic donkey to sleep inside a bathtub.** — This is a real law from Kingman, Arizona, USA. It was written into the Kingman City Ordinance around 1924 after a donkey sleeping in a tub was swept away by a flood.

THE EVIDENCE

No. 33 Rome, Italy — Rome Office for Animal Rights By-law (2005) (*still on the books*)

No. 34 Quitman, Georgia, USA — Quitman Code of Ordinances, Section 8-1 (*still on the books*)

No. 35 Kingman, Arizona, USA — Kingman City Ordinance (circa 1924) (*still on the books*)

No. 36 United Kingdom — Prerogativa Regis, a 1324 statute under King Edward II (*still on the books*)

No. 37 Briollay, France — Mayoral Decree by Mayor André Marchand, July 2018 (*technically enforceable*)

No. 38 New South Wales, Australia — NSW
Wildlife Demonstrator Licence regulations (*still on
the books*)

No. 39 Poland — PKP Intercity Transport
Regulations (2005) (*still on the books*)

No. 40 Norway — Royal Proclamation by the
King of Norway (1972) (*still on the books*)