

FRONTBENCHERS AND BACKBENCHERS

Benches are the seats that members and senators sit on in the House of Representatives and the Senate.

Ministers and shadow ministers sit in the front row while everyone else (ordinary members and senators) sits behind in all the other rows.

The term 'frontbenchers' refers to people who are more senior and influential because they are ministers and shadow ministers. Backbenchers are more often less senior and may one day be promoted to the front bench.

A member who is promoted to minister or shadow minister moves to the front bench. If a member or senator loses his or her position as minister or shadow minister, they move from the front to the back bench.

