

The Constitution

**The Constitution is
the rules for
running our
government.**

**The Constitution is
the supreme law of
the land.**



The Principles of the Constitution

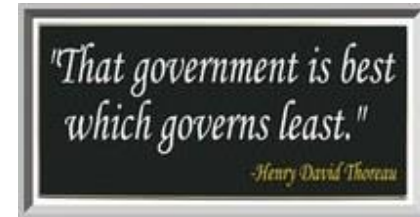
Principles are the beliefs about the purpose and running of a government.

1. Popular Sovereignty – the government derives its power from the people.



2. Republicanism – the people choose their government leaders.

3. Limited Government – government only has the powers the people give it.



4. Federalism – the power to govern is shared between the national government and the states.



3 types of government powers.

Enumerated – Belong only to the Federal Government

Reserved – powers retained by the states

Concurrent – powers shared by the Federal and State governments.

The Principles of the Constitution Continued

Separation of Powers



Three Branches of Government

5. Separation of Powers – each branch of the government has its own responsibilities

3 Branches of Government

Legislative Branch – Congress, bicameral (two houses), makes laws

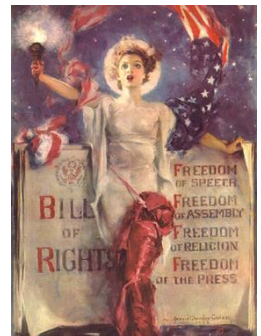
Executive Branch – President, enforces laws

Judicial Branch – Supreme Court, interprets laws



6. Checks and Balances – each branch can check, or limit, the power of the other branches.

7. Individual Rights – basic liberties and rights of all citizens are guaranteed in the Bill of Rights.



Preamble

The introduction to the Constitution is called the Preamble.

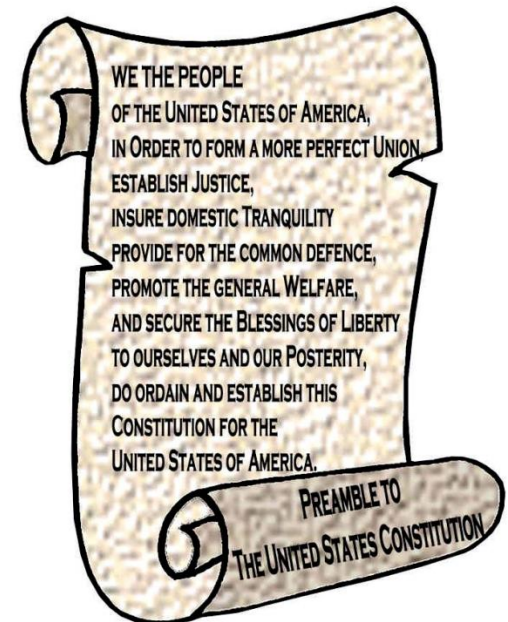
The Preamble begins with the phrase “We the people...”

This means that the government is based on the consent of the governed.

In other words, government gets its power from the people.

The Preamble lists the 6 goals for our Constitution.

- 1. Form a more perfect union**
- 2. Establish justice**
- 3. Insure domestic tranquility**
- 4. Provide for the common defense**
- 5. Promote the general welfare**
- 6. Secure the blessings of liberty**



WE THE PEOPLE
OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,
IN ORDER TO FORM A MORE PERFECT UNION,
ESTABLISH JUSTICE,
INSURE DOMESTIC TRANQUILITY,
PROVIDE FOR THE COMMON DEFENCE,
PROMOTE THE GENERAL WELFARE,
AND SECURE THE BLESSINGS OF LIBERTY
TO OURSELVES AND OUR POSTERITY,
DO ORDAIN AND ESTABLISH THIS
CONSTITUTION FOR THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

PREAMBLE TO
THE UNITED STATES CONSTITUTION

Legislative Branch

Article 1

The Legislative Branch is also called Congress and is made up of two houses:

The Senate and the House of Representatives



The Enumerated Powers of Congress are listed in Article 1, Section 8.

Congress has the power to:

Make laws

Lay and collect taxes

Borrow money

Pay debts and provide for the common defense

Coin money and regulate its value

Establish post offices

Raise and support armies

Provide and maintain a Navy

Regulate commerce

Establish uniform naturalization

Impeach and remove the President and other high officials

Declare war





The House of Representatives

States with the largest populations have the most representatives in the House.

Representatives must be at least 25 years old to serve.

Representatives must be a citizen for at least 7 years.

Representatives must live in the state and district they are representing.

Representatives are elected to a two-year term.

There are 435 members in the House of Representatives.



The Senate

The Senate is the other part of Congress.

There are two senators for each state, which means there are 100 Senators.

Senators must be at least 30 years old.

Senators must be a citizen for at least 9 years.

Senators must live in the state they are representing.

Senators are elected to a six year term.



The Executive Branch Article 2



The executive branch is headed by the President.

The Enumerated Powers of the President are:

- **Take care that the laws be faithfully executed**
- **Recommend Legislation**
- **Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces**
- **Grant reprieves and pardons**
- **Make treaties**
- **Nominate and Appoint Ambassadors**
- **Give Congress information on the State of the Union**
- **Receive Ambassadors and other Public Ministers**



The President

The President is elected to a four-year term.

The President can only serve two terms (8 years).

The President must be a citizen by birth.

The President must be at least 35 years old.

The President must have lived in the United States at least 14 years.

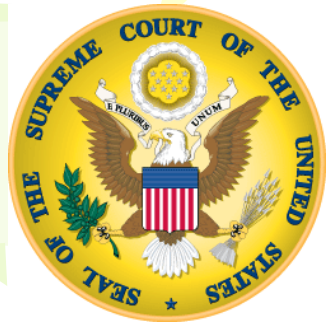
The President today is Barack Obama



The Vice-President today is Joe Biden.



The vice-president becomes president if the president is killed, incapacitated (unable to do his job) or removed from office.



The Judicial Branch Article 3



The Judicial Branch of the federal government is headed by the Supreme Court.

Supreme Court justices are nominated by the president and approved by the Senate.

There are 9 Supreme Court justices, who are appointed for life.

The powers of the Supreme Court are:

- ❖ **Power in all cases in law and equity**
- ❖ **Decide controversies between a state and its citizens and foreign states, citizens, or subjects**
- ❖ **Decide cases affecting Ambassadors**
- ❖ **Decide controversies between states**
- ❖ **Decide controversies to which the United States shall be a part.**

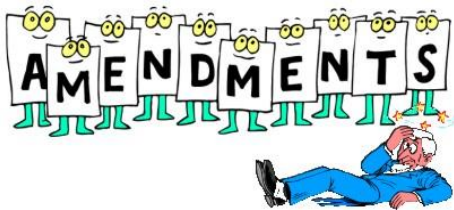
Amendments

The Framers (or writers) of the Constitution had seen their world change drastically and realized change would continue. To address change the Framers included a process to amend or change the Constitution over time.



The first 10 amendments are called the Bill of Rights.

1. Freedom of religion, assembly, press, petition, speech.
2. Right to bear arms.
3. No quartering of soldiers.
4. No unreasonable search or seizure.
5. Right to remain silent, right to have an attorney, no double jeopardy.
6. Right to a speedy trial.
7. Right to a Civil trial by jury.
8. No cruel or unusual punishment, no excessive bail/fine.
9. Peoples rights.
10. States' rights.



There have been 27 amendments to the Constitution.