

UNITED STATES CONSTITUTION

Find a copy of the Constitution of the United States in your textbook or in another reference source. Answer the following questions.

The Preamble and Articles I-VII

- (1) The Constitution begins with an introductory paragraph that states the purposes of the new plan of government. The introduction is called the _____.
It says:

- (2) The Constitution, as it was written in 1787, was divided into numerous parts called "articles." How many articles were there?
- (3) Article I deals with the _____ branch of government.
- (4) Article I is subdivided into ten _____.
- (5) According to Article I, Section 1, legislative or "lawmaking" powers are granted to a _____ made up of a Senate and House of Representatives.
- (6) Article II discusses the organization of the _____ branch.
- (7) Article II, Section 1, says that executive power is given to a _____ of the United States.
- (8) Article III established a _____ branch of government.
- (9) Article III, Section 1, places judicial power in one _____ and various other courts organized by Congress.
- (10) Article IV explains the relationship between the individual _____, and between the states and United States government.
- (11) Changes or additions to the Constitution, called _____, can be made according to the procedures outlined in Article V.
- (12) Article VI says that the United States will pay its debts, that national laws are to be followed when in conflict with state laws, and that government officials must take an _____ in which they promise to support the U.S. Constitution.
- (13) Article VII required that _____ states ratify the Constitution before it could go into effect.

Amendments 1-10

The first ten amendments to the Constitution, known as the Bill of Rights, were adopted in 1791. This was four years after the original Constitution had been written, and two years after George Washington had become president. The Bill of Rights guaranteed that the central government would not take away the rights and liberties of the people.

Decide which one of the ten amendments in the Bill of Rights gave people each of the rights and liberties in the following list. Fill in the space with the number of the amendment. Some numbers will be used more than once.

- (14) _____ the right not to be put on trial twice for the same crime
(15) _____ freedom of assembly
(16) _____ the right to be tried in the state and district where the crime was committed

- (17) _____ no quartering of soldiers in homes without the approval of the owner
- (18) _____ freedom of the press
- (19) _____ the right to have guns
- (20) _____ the right to a public trial
- (21) _____ the right to know the witnesses against oneself
- (22) _____ freedom of speech
- (23) _____ the right to have a lawyer
- (24) _____ the right not to testify against oneself
- (25) _____ the right not to lose life, liberty, or property without due process of law
- (26) _____ the right to be tried soon after being accused of a crime
- (27) _____ freedom of religion
- (28) _____ the right to know the charges on which one is being held
- (29) _____ freedom from unreasonable search and seizure
- (30) _____ the right to be paid for private property taken for public use
- (31) _____ the right to obtain witnesses in one's defense
- (32) _____ freedom to petition the government to correct grievances
- (33) _____ no cruel or unusual punishments
- (34) _____ no excessive bail or fines

Other Amendments

The Founding Fathers realized that changes or additions would have to be made in the Constitution as conditions and circumstances changed in the United States. Yet considering the number of years that have passed since the Constitutional Convention met in 1787, remarkably few revisions have been made in the original document. This is a tribute to the wisdom of the Convention delegates.

Listed below are the amendments that have been adopted since the Bill of Rights was added to the Constitution in 1791. Fill in the space with the number (11th, 12th, etc.) of the amendment being described. Do not use the same number more than once.

- (35) _____ A citizen cannot be denied the right to vote because of race, color, or previous condition of servitude. (This amendment protected the right of black male citizens to vote.)
- (36) _____ No person can be elected president more than twice. No person who has held the office of president for more than two years of a term to which some other person was elected president shall be elected to the office of president more than once.
- (37) _____ The vice-president will become president if the president is removed from office or if he dies or resigns. If the president is unable to carry out his powers and duties, the vice-president will assume the powers and duties while serving as acting president.
- (38) _____ Congress has the power to collect income taxes.
- (39) _____ People may not make, sell, or transport intoxicating liquors within the United States.
- (40) _____ The eighteenth amendment is repealed.
- (41) _____ A person cannot be denied their right to vote because they have not paid a poll tax.
- (42) _____ A citizen of one state cannot sue another state in federal court.
- (43) _____ The two United States Senators from each state are to be elected by the people of the state. (Senators had previously been chosen by state legislatures.)
- (44) _____ Slavery is abolished in the United States.
- (45) _____ All persons born or naturalized in the United States are citizens of the United States and of the state in which they live. (This made former slaves citizens.) No state can take away rights of citizens of the United States. No state can take away a person's life, liberty, or property without due process of law. All persons are given equal protection of the laws.

- (46) _____ Congress must meet at least once every year, with the meeting beginning on January 3. The terms of the president and vice-president end on January 20. (Terms previously ended in March.)
- (47) _____ Citizens of the District of Columbia can vote.
- (48) _____ Members of the Electoral College, called "electors," will vote for one person as president and for another as vice-president.
- (49) _____ Qualified citizens eighteen years or older may vote.
- (50) _____ The right to vote cannot be denied on account of sex. (This amendment gave women the right to vote.)

Thought Questions

- (1) In your opinion, what are the five most important rights and freedoms listed in the Bill of Rights (amendments 1-10)?
1. _____
 2. _____
 3. _____
 4. _____
 5. _____
- (2) Which five amendments not included in the Bill of Rights do you consider to be of greatest importance? Give the number of the amendment and a reason for choosing it.
1. _____ amendment: _____
 2. _____ amendment: _____
 3. _____ amendment: _____
 4. _____ amendment: _____
 5. _____ amendment: _____