

A Short Outline of the Constitution

The Constitution is a plan for governing our country.

It has a preamble (introduction) and seven articles, or sections. The original Constitution covered these subjects:

Article I:

The Congress.

Article II:

The president.

Article III:

The judges and national courts.

Article IV:

How states relate to each other and to the national government.

Article V:

How the Constitution can be amended or changed.

Article VI:

The Constitution is the supreme law of the land.

Article VII:

Ratification or approval.

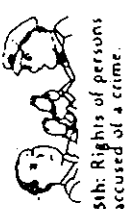
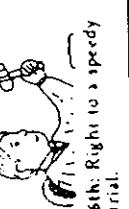


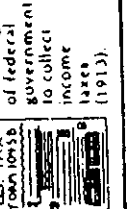

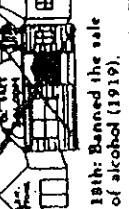
The Preamble

We the People

of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, 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.

Amendments to the Constitution

The first 10 amendments are called the Bill of Rights. Many people, including Thomas Jefferson, had agreed to support the Constitution only if these basic rights were added. This was done in 1791.

 2nd: The right to bear arms.	 3rd: Limits the quartering of soldiers.	 4th: Limits searches and seizures.	 5th: Rights of persons accused of a crime.	 6th: Right to a speedy trial.
 7th: Jury trial in civil cases.	 8th: Excessive bail or punishment; cruel and unusual punishment forbidden.	 9th: Citizens entitled to rights not listed in the Constitution.	 10th: Powers reserved to the states or people.	 11th: Rules for lawsuits against states (1798).
 12th: New way of electing president and vice president (1804).	 13th: Slavery abolished (1865).	 14th: Guarantees citizenship, due process and equal protection under the law (1868).	 15th: Protects voting rights (1870).	 16th: Right of federal government to collect income taxes (1913).
 17th: Election of senators by the people (1913).	 18th: Banned the sale of alcohol (1919).	 19th: Women given the vote (1920).	 20th: Sets date when president's and Congress term begins (1933).	 21st: Repeals 18th amendment (1933).
 22nd: Limits the president to two terms (1951).	 23rd: Gives people in the District of Columbia the right to vote for president (1961).	 24th: Forbids paying tax to vote (1964).	 25th: If something happens to the president, who is next in line (1967).	 26th: Sets 18 as the voting age (1971).

27th CONGRESSIONAL PAY: Pay increases for Congress take place after next election.