

The United States Constitution

An Article-by-Article Outline

How the Constitution is Divided

1. Articles – the major divisions
2. Sections – divisions of an article
3. Clauses – divisions of a section



Basic Outline: Articles

- **Article I** – Legislative Branch
- **Article II** – Executive Branch
- **Article III** – Judicial Branch
- **Article IV** – Relations Between the States
- **Article V** – Amending the Constitution
- **Article VI** – Prior Debts, National Supremacy and Oaths of Office
- **Article VII** – Ratification

Basic Outline: Amendments

- 1 - Religion and Expression
- 2 - Bearing Arms
- 3 - Quartering Soldiers
- 4 - Search and Seizure
- 5 - Due Process
- 6 - Rights of the Accused
- 7 - Civil Trials
- 8 - Excessive Bail and Cruel/Unusual Punishment
- 9 - Protecting Unlisted Rights
- 10 - Reserved Powers

Basic Outline: Amendments

- 13 - Slavery and Involuntary Servitude
- 14 - Rights Guaranteed, Privileges and Immunities of Citizenship, Due Process and Equal Protection
- 15 - Rights of Citizens to Vote
- 17 - Popular Election of Senators
- 18 - Prohibition of Intoxicating Liquors
- 19 - Woman's Suffrage Rights
- 21 - Repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment
- 22 - Presidential Tenure
- 25 - Presidential Vacancy, Disability, and Inability

Article 1: Congress

- Section 1: Congress holds all legislative powers
- Section 2: House of Representatives
 - Qualifications for being a member
 - Authorized to begin impeachment process
- Section 3: Senate
 - Qualifications for being a member
 - Vice President is official President of Senate and votes to break ties
 - Authorized to hold impeachment trials

- Section 4: Congressional elections
- Section 5: Self-regulation in Congress
- Section 6: Privileges and restrictions on members of Congress
- Section 7: Revenue, Presidential veto and Congressional overrides
 - Revenue bills must begin in the House
 - Presidential veto power over Congress
 - Override of Presidential veto requires 2/3 majority vote in both houses

- Section 8: Enumerated powers
 - Taxation
 - Regulating Commerce
 - Coin money
 - Declare war
 - Raise and support armies
 - Necessary and Proper Clause: "Congress shall have the power to... make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution the foregoing powers, and all other powers vested by this Constitution in the government of the United States"
- Section 9: Limits on legislative power
- Section 10: Limits on state power

Article II: The Executive

- Section 1: Qualifications, election, compensation, and oath
- Section 2: Authority
 - Commander in chief of armed forces
 - Power to grant pardons, except in case of impeachment
 - Make treaties with 2/3 agreement of Senate
- Section 3: Duties
 - State of Union address
 - Execute federal laws
 - Advises Congress
- Section 4: Grounds for Impeachment ("Treason, Bribery, or other high Crimes and Misdemeanors")

Article III: The Courts

- Section 1: One Supreme Court, with inferior courts established by Congress
- Section 2: Jurisdiction (extent of power)
 - Cases under the Constitution
 - Federal laws
 - Disputes between states
 - Foreign treaties
- Section 3: Treason against United States

Article IV: Interstate Relations

- Section 1: "Full faith and credit" given in each state to acts of other states
- Section 2: Privileges and immunities, legal obligations
 - "The citizens of each state shall be entitled to all privileges and immunities of citizens in the several states"
 - A citizen cannot avoid justice or other legal obligations by fleeing to another state
- Section 3: Congress has the power to manage public property

Article V: Amending the Constitution

- Proposing amendments
 - Congress with 2/3 majority vote in both houses
 - 2/3 majority of state legislatures apply for Congress to call a constitutional convention
- Ratifying amendments
 - Amendment becomes part of Constitution when ratified by 3/4 of state legislatures

Article VI: Prior Debts, National Supremacy and Oaths of Office

- Prior debts will be honored
- The Constitution is the supreme law of the land
- Officials in the federal government must take an oath to support the Constitution

Article VII: Ratification

- State conventions will be called to decide to ratify the Constitution
- Nine states are necessary to put the Constitution into action (for those states)
