


## U. S. GOVERNMENT

The **Constitution** was written in 1789 and is the basic design for how our government should work. It begins with “We the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect Union...”

The first ten amendments to the Constitution are called the **Bill of Rights**. New Amendments have been added through the years, but the Constitution is still the basic design of our US government today.

The United States government is a federal republic in which the citizens elect representatives to speak for them.



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**Executive Branch** suggests laws and makes sure that people follow the laws of our government.

**President** - The Chief Executive is elected by the Electoral College.

Commander in Chief of the Armed Services

Signs or vetoes all new laws.

He works with the leaders of other countries.

May only serve two terms of 4 years each.

Makes a State of the Union address every year to explain issues to the people.

Lives in the White House while serving.

**Vice President** - Must take over the president's duties if the president dies or cannot serve.

Presides over the Senate.

**Cabinet** - 15 members give the president advice.

**Legislative Branch** - Known as Congress, it meets in the United States Capitol Building in Washington, DC to make laws for all 50 states. New laws begin as bills and must go through a process to get the approval of both the Senate and the House to become a law. Congress also decides how much people should pay in taxes and how to spend the tax money.

**Senate**- Two senators from each state are elected by the people

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**Polling Place** - the place where voters cast ballots

**Ballots** - electronic or printed forms used to vote.

**Electoral College** - Each state has electors who actually choose the president. Each state has the same number of electors as senators and representatives in Congress. The District of Columbia has 3 electors. Electors are chosen by political leaders of each state. Usually they all vote for whichever candidate wins the most votes of the people in their state. That means the candidate with the most votes from each state gets all the electoral votes for that state. Even if the popular vote is close, all electors' votes go to the candidate who has the most.

## Try this!

Find out who your state Senators and Representatives are. Find out your state's Senators and Representatives in the Federal Government. Are they the same people?

A graphic showing a row of diverse children standing on a green grassy area. Above them are four thought bubbles containing various educational icons: a cube, a microscope, a protractor, a globe, a chemistry flask, a globe, a DNA helix, a pie chart, a bar chart, a calculator, and a plus-minus sign. The word 'ABC' is also visible in one of the bubbles.

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