

BRANCHES OF GOVERNMENT

LEGISLATIVE CREATES LAWS

- 2 per state
- Senators serve for 6 years
- Representatives serve for 2 years
- Distributed among the 50 states in proportion to population

SENATE
100 MEMBERS

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
435 MEMBERS

In addition to the 435 House Reps there are 6 non-voting members representing D.C., Puerto Rico, and four other U.S. territories.

CHECKS AND BALANCES:
Ensures no one single person or entity has a monopoly on power

As the President's closest and most trusted advisors, members of the Cabinet are considered experts in their field and offer advice as it relates to their specific agency.

FEDERAL AGENCIES AND COMMISSIONS
Each branch has agencies and commissions that perform support functions or manage Federal programs.
Examples include the GPO, CIA, EPA, FJC, and NASA.

THE UNITED STATES CONSTITUTION

- Highest law of the United States
- Creates a separation of powers
- Oldest written constitution still in use
- 7 articles 27 amendments
- Creates 3 branches of government
- Uses a system of checks and balances
- Congress can impeach the President.
- Congress must approve treaties and appointments.
- Congress can overturn court decisions by amendments.
- Congress can impeach judges.
- The Supreme Court can overturn laws.
- The President can veto the laws Congress makes.
- Congress can override vetoes.

- Must be a natural born citizen
- Must be at least 35 years old
- Must have lived in the U.S. for 14 years

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

VICE PRESIDENT

- #1 First in line in order of succession
- Cannot be from the same state as the President

CABINET

- Consists of the Vice President and...
- ...15 heads of the executive departments

SUPREME COURT

- #1 Highest court in the U.S.
- Appointments are made for life
- Made up of 1 Chief Justice and 8 Associate Justices
- Composed of 13 courts
- Hears appeals from District Court cases
- Decisions can be appealed to Supreme Court

APPELLATE

- Composed of 94 total judicial districts
- Jurisdiction covers both civil and criminal Federal cases
- Trial courts of the Federal system

DISTRICT

JUDICIAL INTERPRETS LAWS

EXECUTIVE IMPLEMENTS LAWS



BEN'S GUIDE

TO THE U.S. GOVERNMENT
A SERVICE OF THE U.S. GOVERNMENT PUBLISHING OFFICE