



Handout 3 What's Not in the Bill of Rights

Parts of the U.S. Constitution
The Preamble | The 7 Articles | The 27 Amendments

The Preamble



The Preamble is the one-paragraph introduction to the Constitution. Here are the words which are written in 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.

The Articles (7)

Article 1 – The Legislative Branch

The longest Article in the U.S. Constitution with 10 sections, Article 1 creates the Congress to make laws; divides Congress into a Senate and House of Representatives; establishes eligibility requirements for each office; lists some powers of Congress; and places limits the legislative branch.

Article 2 – The Executive Branch

Outlines that executive power will be vested in a president and vice president; establishes terms of office and roles of the president; names eligibility requirements for the office of President; outlines the obligations and powers of the president; provides for removal from office upon impeachment.

Article 3 – The Judicial Branch

Establishes judicial power which shall be vested in one supreme Court; authorizes Congress to establish inferior federal courts; determines tenure of judges; outlines jurisdiction; defines treason.

Article 4 – The States

Outlines the duties states have to each other, as well as those the federal government has to the states; addresses the admittance and/or creation of new states to the Union

Article 5 – Making Amendments

Process for proposing and ratifying amendments to the United States Constitution

Article 6 – Supreme Law of the Land

Supremacy Clause; the Constitution is the highest law of the land

Article 7 – Ratification

The Constitution was officially established when nine out of 13 states approved the document.

The 27 Amendments

1. Freedom of religion, speech, press, assembly, petition
2. Right to bear arms
3. Quartering of troops
4. Search and seizure
5. Due process, double jeopardy, self-incrimination
6. Speedy and public trial by impartial jury; right to be informed of the nature and cause of the accusation; right to be confronted with witnesses against the accused; right to counsel
7. Civil trials; Common law suits
8. Excess bail or fines, cruel and unusual punishment
9. Rights named in the U.S. Constitution do not negate rights not listed
10. Powers reserved to states, or the people
11. Lawsuits against a state
12. Election of president and vice president
13. Abolition of slavery
14. Due process, equal protection, privileges of citizens
15. Voting rights not to be denied to citizens because of race
16. Federal income tax
17. Composition of the U.S. Senate and Election of U.S. Senators
18. Prohibition
19. Voting rights not to be denied to citizens on account of sex/gender
20. Commencement of Presidential and Congressional terms
21. Repeal of prohibition (18th Amendment)
22. No person shall be elected to the office of President more than twice; President limited to two terms (not to exceed a total of ten years in office)
23. Presidential vote (electors) for the District of Columbia
24. Abolition of poll tax in federal elections
25. Presidential succession
26. Voting rights are not to be denied to citizens 18 years of age or older
27. Congressional compensation and pay raises

*Any variations in spelling of certain words are based on the original spelling found in the U.S. Constitution.