

Chapter 1

The Declaration of Independence

Before we begin learning the Constitution let's view **the big picture**.

Scotland & Wales united with England to form Great Britain in 1707. By 1732, Great Britain had created 13 Colonies in the New World, (now known as part of “the United States.”)

Great Britain increasingly treated their 13 Colonies as groups of slaves to be used & abused at the pleasure of King George of Great Britain. He responded to Colonist's pleas for mercy with brutality, while arrogantly disregarding any rights or representation by the colonies.¹

Tensions grew, as did violence in the early 1770s. By 1773 the colonies (today called “states”), improved their communications with each other as they realized they had to unite to survive. Collectively, they sent petitions of complaints to King George, who continually responded with military action & more unreasonable demands, (to let the Colonies know they had no right to even protest the King's decisions.)

Weary of oppressive rule, & growing military conflict, the Colonists had no other recourse than to write, publish, and distribute an official “Declaration of Independence” from Great Britain; which they did on July 4th, 1776.

1. The Colonies listed over two dozen specific grievances in the Declaration of Independence as justification for separation from Great Britain.

Proclaiming a Declaration of Independence

(from Great Britain)

Great Britain (the world empire), responded to the Declaration of Independence with massive military oppression in order to subdue the colonies. The birth pangs of the Revolutionary War had intensified!

The colonies (states), having exhausted every peaceful means for relief, now had no choice but to separate. The Declaration of Independence was their charter for their new country, being not one of a confederation of “Colonies,” but of united “States.”

This charter of independence emphasized that in this new government all were created with certain rights:

- these rights came from God,² not government,
- government could not give or take them away.
- government’s purpose?... to protect those rights!
- the government was to be subject to the people.
- the government was to serve the people.

This charter of independence concluded with the reasoning for the separation from Great Britain, (justified by a list of 27 specific grievances).

2. The God-given rights are based on the universal moral law as seen in nature and in the Bible, summarized in the 10-Commandments, a moral code common to all. These created-in-mankind “Laws of Nature & Nature’s God” declares that mankind inherently knows what is wrong, (murder, stealing, lying, etc). This Biblical principle is seen in Psalm 19 & Romans 1.

**God,
our Creator**



We the People



Government

The Declaration of Independence establishes a government where authority is delegated from God to “We the People,” and then to the Government.

Here's another way we can view the meat of the Declaration of Independence. At the heart of this charter is not just a declaration of separation of Colonies from Great Britain, but also the new order of authority for the Colonies.

Think of it as God owning a factory. He assigns people to manage his factory so that it is productive according to His standards. That way there will not only be a great product, but also all who spend time in His factory will be blessed.

The people who manage the factory are given the authority to hire & fire employees. The people assign specific tasks to the employees so that the factory runs smoothly.

When this order is followed, the factory will quickly become known as the ideal factory, the best place to work, with the highest wages, most benefits, and the one with the happiest people of any factory.

Everybody will want to be a part of this factory. No other factory will be able to compete. This factory will be "the head & not the tail," the one above all other factories. It is a factory that is unique from all others in its structure of authority. It fits into God's order.

**God,
(the owner)**



**We the People
(the manager)**



**Government
(the employees)**

God sets the rules,
(determines the standard & boundaries)
"We the People,"
(manage God's country within His rules)
the Government then
carries out the orders of the people.

Forming a new government!

With independence from Great Britain officially declared, Great Britain reacted with all-out war. The states had to rush to make a blueprint, a written Constitution of how their charter for the new government was to operate.

The Declaration of Independence & the Constitution are inseparably linked together. Each is meaningless without the other. Writing the Constitution was a great challenge because the people needed the strength of a central Federal Government, but they feared that if it had too much power, then it could strip the States (and the people of the States), of their rights. The powers must be balanced between the Federal & State Governments, as well as between the States in order to protect the people.

Foremost, it must be a government ruled by “we, the people,” a Republic, which is where the people choose representatives. It had to have both limits of power, and recourse on how to rein it in when limits were violated.

It could not be a Democracy, a Democratic rule, (the rule of the mob), which historically always resulted in tyranny. All people had to be equally represented, not a single loud faction silencing those of opposing opinions.

The Constitution of the United States is unique among all other nations. It is the *ONLY* one where *THE PEOPLE* have the final say. And, like Israel, the United States is unique in being established in Covenant with God.

Like ripples in a pond, one follows from the importance of the other.

The Declaration of Independence “The Charter”

Gives the reason for the separation from the dictatorship of the King.
Gives the purpose of the newly formed government, (to protect the God-given rights of the people).



The Constitution of the United States “The By-Laws of the Charter”

How the newly formed government is to operate.
The rules for the limits & powers for the Federal government & between it & the various States.
A government under “we the people,” who are under God.

Splitting the Legislature

The Founding Fathers who drafted the Constitution represented 13 Colonies of Great Britain. The Colonies were nervous about giving too much power to a Federal Government which could then enslave them. They were also concerned that States of greater size or greater population would squelch the smaller States.

Each Colony had their unique concerns due to their individual differences. So they wanted to be able to control their peculiar priorities.

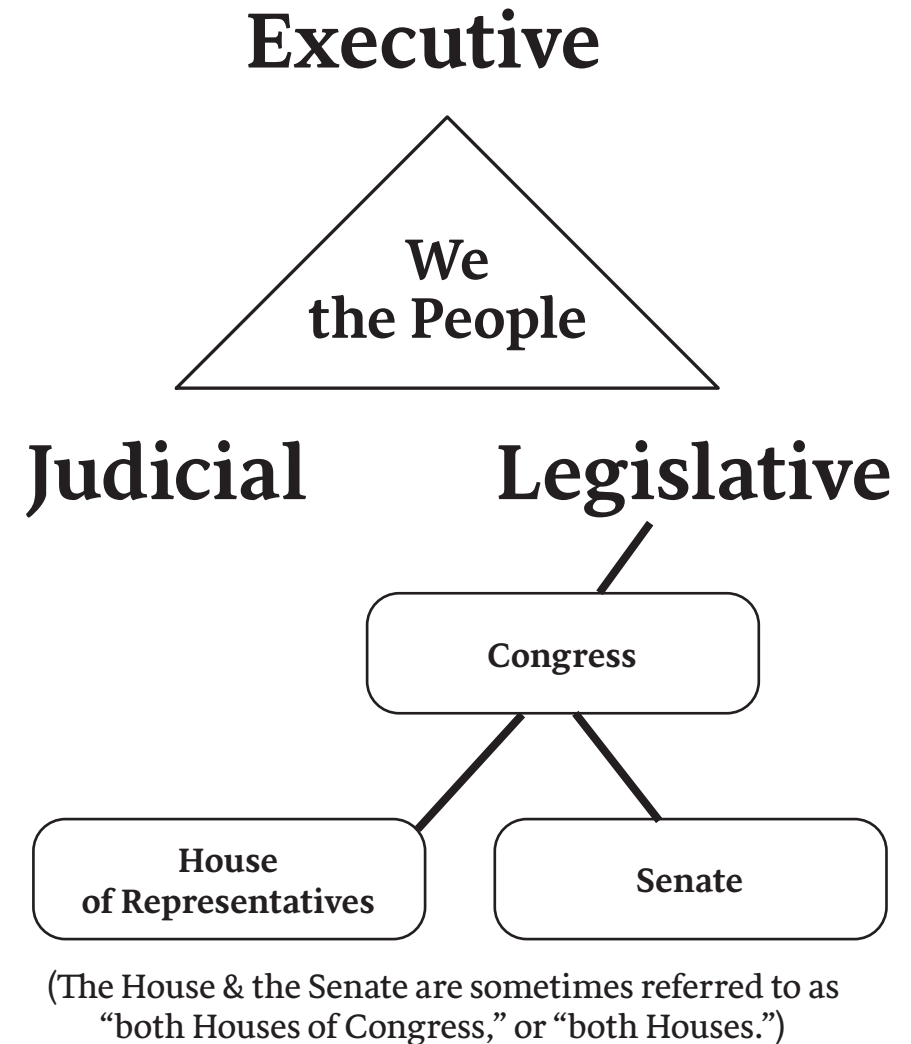
The solution? Limit the Legislature (Law-makers)...
...split the Legislative Branch (Congress) into 2-parts:

The House of Representatives and...
The Senate, both elected by the people.

The number of Representatives for each State would be based on their population. Larger population Colonies/"States," would have more Representatives, and smaller States fewer.

The Senate however would have just 2-Senators per State, regardless of their population or geographical size. This balances the States so that larger States would not be able to bully the smaller States.

The House & Senate would work together to make laws.



The **Legislative** branch makes the laws but has other powers too, like controlling the money and being the ones to declare war. We look at that later, but for now we build the framework to get overall understanding.

The **Executive** enforces the Laws that were created by the Legislature. This branch is ruled over by a President, and Vice-President, along with a Cabinet of about 24 people, each one responsible for a different area, such as Agriculture, Education, Transportation, National Parks, Economy, etc. The President is also the Commander in Chief over the entire military.

The **Judicial** branch interprets the law. The judicial system has three basic levels, District Courts, Appeals Courts (also known as “Appellate Courts”), over them, and then the Supreme Court at the top.

If someone in a district court doesn’t like how the judge and/or jury ruled, then the case can be appealed to a higher court, the Appellate Court, which must hear the case. From there, if the ruling is to be contested, it goes to the Supreme Court.

But there is only one Supreme Court. They cannot hear all cases submitted to them, so they only have to hear what they can handle. They pick their cases.

There are hundreds of Districts Courts, but only 12 Appellate Courts, each covering a different region, plus one specialized Appellate Court. The one Supreme Court has 9-members. It is an odd number so that there can never be a tie in making a decision.

The 7-Articles

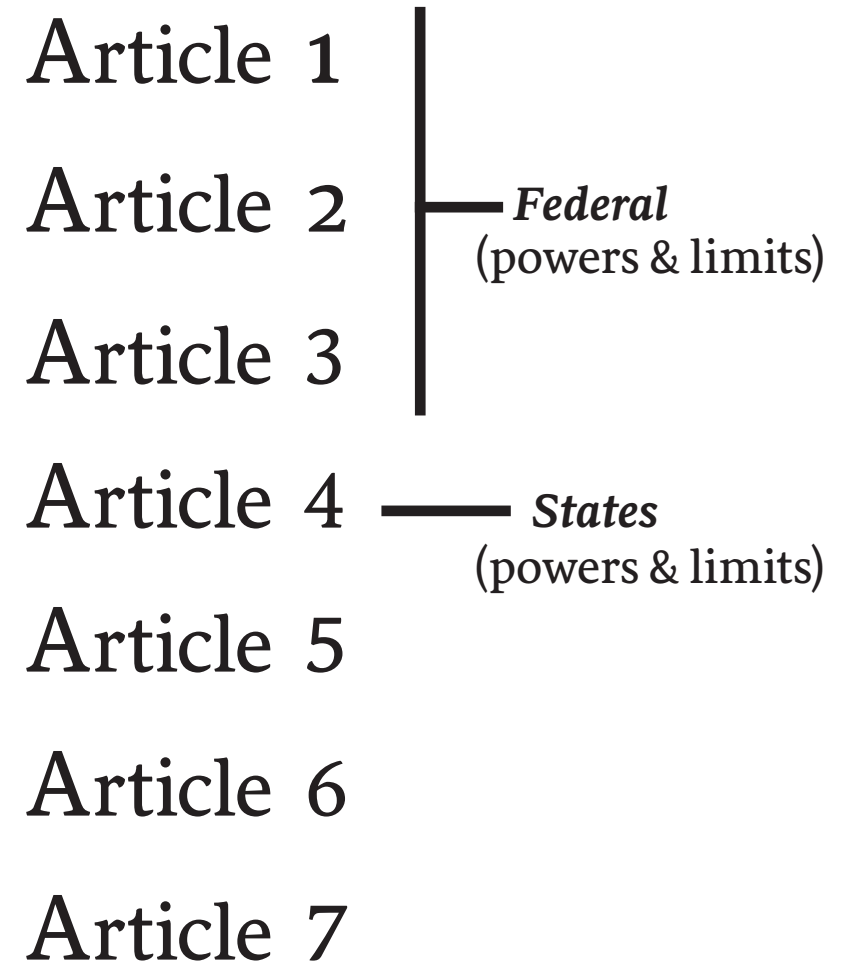
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|-----------|--|
| Article 1 | <i>Legislature</i>
(makes the Laws) |
| Article 2 | <i>Executive</i>
(enforces the Laws) |
| Article 3 | <i>Judicial</i>
(interprets the Laws) |
| Article 4 | |
| Article 5 | |
| Article 6 | |
| Article 7 | |

Article Four is all about the States' rights. This Article specifies the powers and the limitations of the States.

Article Four also clarifies the relationship between the Federal's authority and the State's authority. Article Four lays out clearly when each gets the last word in a conflict.

There are checks & balances written in to keep the Federal and the States from exercising too much power over each other.

The 7-Articles



Besides the USA, Israel is the other exception. It also has a Constitution based on God. Their Constitution was set up as the Torah, the first 5-books of Moses, upon which the Prophets & Writings are based. It was given (over 3,000 years ago), to be the model for all nations. Israel has outlasted Assyria, Babylon and many other world empires.

Only Israel & the USA were formed in covenant with God. Those laws of Moses are the basis for our Constitution too. That's why we see Moses engraved at the top of the Supreme Court building, and in buildings throughout our capitol city; and that's why we are hated by most nations of the world. We do not fold into their corrupt World Order.

But, the Constitution for Israel & for the United States only work when "We the People" walk in God's ways and put Him first and then stay active in governing. When the people become ungodly or apathetic, God withdraws His protection, and the nation collapses, as happened with Israel repeatedly and very nearly so with the United States in the last few years.

Let's move on to Article-7. It gives the process (ratification), to make the Constitution to become legally the law of the land. The Constitution is meaningless if it does not apply. Ratification of the Constitution was a difficult process that took years because this Article "locked it in," preventing man from getting too much control over "We the People." Every new amendment must also be ratified.

The 7-Articles

Article 1	<i>Legislature</i> (makes the Laws)
Article 2	<i>Executive</i> (enforces the Laws)
Article 3	<i>Judicial</i> (interprets the Laws)
Article 4	<i>States</i> (powers & limits)
Article 5	<i>Amendments</i> (how to make them)
Article 6	<i>Supremacy</i> (above all other laws)
Article 7	<i>Ratification</i> (how to "lock it in")

There are a total of 27 amendments as of early 2026.

The diagram on the facing page emphasizes the importance of the first 10 Amendments. Each is a specific God-given right according to “the Laws of Nature,” (which we first mentioned on page 2).

Some founding fathers would not ratify the Constitution unless these were included. Others wanted to amend them later after the Constitution was ratified, (scary thought for politicians to postpone doing something that legally includes rights for the people!).

But the signers came to recognize the importance of these first 10 amendments, and so they were incorporated as part of the Constitution when it was first ratified.

1st Amendment
2nd Amendment
3rd Amendment
4th Amendment
5th Amendment
6th Amendment
7th Amendment
8th Amendment
9th Amendment
10th Amendment
11th Amendment
12th Amendment
13th Amendment
14th Amendment
15th Amendment
16th Amendment
17th Amendment
18th Amendment
19th Amendment
20th Amendment
21st Amendment
22nd Amendment
23rd Amendment
24th Amendment
25th Amendment
26th Amendment
27th Amendment

The Bill of Rights

Ratified along with
the Constitution
in 1787

Here's another way to look at the Bill of Rights.

We note that it took 3 detailed Amendments to protect a person to be “innocent until proven guilty.”

In just the first 10 Amendments, we find that there is great detail to protect “We the People” from a tyrannical government. Why? Because there is no other country in the world where the citizens have such protections.

Pick a country, any country, any type of government. The People of those countries do not have these God-given rights. In other countries the governments give “privileges,” and they can take them away, and their history proves that taking them away was common.

Israel is the only other country established by a covenant with God. Yet, even there, they do not have all of these rights.

But there is more! There are 17 additional Amendments. We'll point out the high points in these, leaving it up to readers to look up the details in a copy of the Constitution. See the Resources Section on page 236.

The Bill of Rights

1st Amendment

- Freedom of Religion
- Freedom of Speech
- Freedom of the Press
- Freedom to Assemble
- Freedom to Complain to the Government

2nd Amendment

The right to keep & bear arms

3rd Amendment

Protects private homes from housing soldiers

4th Amendment

No search & seizure without a search warrant

5th Amendment

6th Amendment

7th Amendment

The rights for a fair trial and the guidelines for what makes a fair trial

- 8th Amendment (The punishment must fit the crime)
 9th Amendment (Clarify Authority for Unmentioned Rights)
 10th Amendment (Limits powers of the Federal Gov.)

The **27th Amendment** rules that any law regarding a change in salary for Representatives and Senators cannot go into effect until the next election of Representatives.

Since Congress is given the power to control the money (see Article 1), then they also vote for their own pay raises. This amendment puts the breaks on those tempted to be greedy.

This Amendment was ratified in 1992. There have been no new Amendments since then.

11th Amendment

Judges in one State cannot deal with cases in other States, plus non-citizens cannot bring up cases.

12th Amendment

Clear guidelines given for the electoral college voting.

13th Amendment

Abolishes slavery/involuntary servitude except for convicted criminals as punishment for crime(s).

14th Amendment

Citizenship, No. of Reps, Congress qualifications, Debts to pay.

15th Amendment

Right to vote regardless of race, color, or previously a slave.

16th Amendment

Gave Congress power to collect tax on income in all States.

17th Amendment

Two Senators/State for 6-year term & how to fill vacancies.

18th Amendment

Regulating liquor but repealed by the 21st Amendment.

19th Amendment

The right for women to vote.

20th Amendment

Rules the beginning & end of terms of Reps, Senators, President & Vice-President plus how to handle vacancies.

21st Amendment

Bans bringing intoxicating liquor into States.

22nd Amendment

President cannot be elected for more than two terms.

23rd Amendment

Allows 3 electoral college votes for Washington DC.

24th Amendment

Cannot deny right to vote for failure to pay poll tax or any tax.

25th Amendment

Four parts on how to fill President & Vice President vacancies.

26th Amendment

The voting age of US citizens begins at 18.

27th Amendment

Pay raises for Congress cannot go into effect until after the next election of Representatives.

Section 2 defines who can be a Representative, how many there can be, how to determine that, how to fill an unexpected vacancy of an elected Rep and who is to orchestrate that procedure.

Section 2 ends with the first Power given to the Reps. This power grants to the House of Representatives as the only ones who can initiate an impeachment to remove ANY elected or appointed official from government; including even the President, Judges, (Supreme Court Justices are not exempt), Senators, and even one of their own Representatives.

At first, there was to be a Representative for every 30,000 people, which was great, but then in 1929 a law was passed to limit the total to 435 Reps. Why? Because they could only fit 435 chairs in the House Chamber!

So the population of the whole country was counted in a Census and then divided by 435. As of 2026 that meant roughly one Representative per every 750,000 people.

What's wrong with this picture? The voice of "We the People" got diluted. The original 1st Amendment proposed was to limit one Rep per 30,000 to 50,000 people. It was voted as ratified, but the final paperwork got messed up by Connecticut, therefore this vital Amendment never got ratified. However, there was no time limit on its ratification process, so it could still be done.

Further related details are made in other parts of the Constitution, some of which fit into our summary here.

Article 1 Legislature Powers & Limitations (specified in 10 Sections)

Section 2, (The Rules for the House in 6-Clauses)

Section 2, Clause 1

1.2.1 Representatives (Reps), are elected every 2-years, (& from within their State).

Section 2, Clause 2

1.2.2 The minimum qualifications for Reps:

- 25 years old
- 7 years as a US citizen
- resident of the State they represent.

Section 2, Clause 3

1.2.3 The number of Reps for each State is determined by the population of that State. Each State must have at least one Representative.

Section 2, Clause 4

1.2.4 The population of each State is to be updated every 10 years by taking a Census of citizens.

Section 2, Clause 5

1.2.5 When vacancies happen, the Governor of that State schedules a special election to fill the vacancy.

Section 2, Clause 6

1.2.6 The House of Reps choose their Speaker, & have the sole Power to initiate Impeachments, (but this requires confirmation by the Senate before the public official can be removed).

Section 1 Clause 14 gives Congress the power to decide the order of succession, which they did by law.

Here is the order for Presidential succession:

- Vice-President
- Speaker of the House
- Senate President back-up person for the Vice-President when he is not available to be Senate President. This Senate President Back-up person is called, “the Senate President Pro Tempore,” which means in Latin, “for the time being.” The Senate has always elected the senior member of the majority party for this spot, followed by Cabinet Members, based on when each department was established.
- Secretary of State
- Secretary of the Treasury
- Secretary of Defense
- Attorney General (Department of Justice)
- Secretary of the Interior
- Secretary of Agriculture
- Secretary of Commerce
- Secretary of Labor
- Secretary of Health & Human Services
- Secretary of Housing & Urban Development
- Secretary of Transportation
- Secretary of Energy
- Secretary of Education
- Secretary of Veterans Affairs
- Secretary of Homeland Security

Article 2 (Executive Powers & Limitations)

[As amended by the 12th, 20th & 25th Amendments]

Section 1 Electing/replacing procedures for President.

Section 1, Clause 13, (2.1.13)

[See the 25th Amendment]

Section 1, Clause 14, (2.1.14)

Congress by law can determine who fills the vacancy of both President & Vice-President, (which they have done).

Section 1, Clause 15, (2.1.15)

[See the 25th Amendment]

Section 1, Clause 16, (2.1.16)

[See the 25th Amendment]

Section 1, Clause 17, (2.1.17)

[See the 25th Amendment]

Section 1, Clause 18, (2.1.18)

[See the 25th Amendment]

Section 1, Clause 19, (2.1.19)

The President’s Federal Government income is limited to his salary, which is to stay the same for his term.

Section 1, Clause 20, (2.1.20)

Before starting his term, the President must swear an oath of allegiance to the Constitution.