

Constitutional Amendments

The first ten amendments were passed in 1791 and are collectively called the Bill of Rights.

1. Five freedoms—**separation of church and state; freedom of speech, press, and assembly; right to petition government** for settlement of a complaint or to make up for wrongdoing
2. Right to bear **arms**
3. **Quartering of troops** prohibited in peacetime without permission
4. No unreasonable **search and seizure**
5. **Rights of accused persons**—capital crimes require Grand Jury indictment; can't be tried twice for the same crime (no double jeopardy); can't be compelled to testify against yourself; can't be deprived of life, liberty, or property without due process of law; owner must be compensated for private property taken for public use
6. Right to **speedy, public trial**
7. Right to **trial by jury** in civil cases
8. **Limits of fines and punishments**—no excessive bail nor cruel or unusual punishment
9. **Rights of the people**—rights stated in the Constitution are not the only rights that people have
10. Powers not delegated to the federal government nor denied to the states by the Constitution are **reserved to the states or the people**
11. **Lawsuits against states (1798)** Federal judicial power does not extend to lawsuits brought against individual states.
12. **Election of executives (1804)** Established procedures for the electoral college to vote for specific candidates for president and vice-president.
13. **Slavery abolished (1865)** Involuntary servitude is illegal except as punishment for a crime.
14. **Civil rights (1868)** All persons born or naturalized in the U.S. are citizens; states may not abridge rights of citizens—equal protection of the law, due process, compensation if the government takes private property. States will lose some representation if they deny the vote to any male citizens. Former Confederate leaders not allowed to hold government positions.
15. **Right to vote (1870)** Voting privileges cannot be denied on the basis of race or previous condition of servitude.
16. **Income tax (1913)** Legalized a direct tax on income and profit, not dependent on population distribution.
17. **Direct election of Senators (1913)** U.S. Senators will be elected by the people, not by state legislatures.
18. **Prohibition (1919)** The manufacture, transportation, or sale of alcoholic beverages is prohibited.
19. **Woman suffrage (1920)** Women gained the right to vote equal to men.
20. **“Lame duck” sessions (1933)** The terms of president and vice-president end on January 20, and of Congress on January 3, instead of in March. Modified some of the 12th Amendment process of choosing a president.
21. **Repeal of prohibition (1933)** Repealed the 18th Amendment. Alcohol was legal again.
22. **Limit on presidential terms (1951)** A president can serve only two terms.
23. **Voting in the District of Columbia (1961)** The District of Columbia may have members of the electoral college to choose the president and vice-president. The number will be equal to its relative size if it were a state.
24. **Abolition of poll taxes (1964)** States may not use poll taxes as a voting requirement in federal elections.
25. **Presidential disability/succession (1967)** Established procedures for how the office of president or vice-president will be filled in the event of death, resignation, removal from office, or disability.
26. **18-year old vote (1971)** National voting age set at 18.
27. **Congressional pay (1992)** Congressional pay raises begin in the session of Congress after the one that voted for the raise.