

Guide to the U.S. Constitution for Middle School Civics

Preamble	Goals and purposes of government	The people give power to the government (“do ordain and establish”) Form a more perfect union Establish justice Insure domestic tranquility (see Article IV) Provide for the common defense Promote general welfare Secure blessings of liberty now and forever
Article I	Powers and qualifications of Congress	House: Introduce tax bills, bring articles of impeachment Senate: Impeachment trials/conviction Congress: Raise and support armies and navies, coin and print money, declare war, elastic clause/implied powers/necessary and proper, enumerated powers, naturalization laws, regulation of immigration, regulation of trade How a bill becomes a law Writ of habeas corpus Ex post facto laws
Article II	Powers and qualifications of the president	Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces Chief Executive (enforces and upholds the law) Make treaties (confirmed by the Senate) Make appointments (confirmed by the Senate) Veto power
Article III	Powers and qualifications of the U.S. Supreme Court Federal courts	Original jurisdiction Appellate jurisdiction (Writ of certiorari) Judicial review (not in the U.S. Constitution; established with <i>Marbury v. Madison</i>)
Article IV	States’ rights	Each state guaranteed a representative government Each state protected from invasion Each state protected from domestic violence
Article V	Amendment process	Propose: 2/3 of each house of Congress OR 2/3 of the states will call a convention for proposing amendments Ratify: 3/4 of the state legislatures OR convention of 3/4 of the state legislatures
Article VI	National government’s rights	Supremacy clause (if a federal and state law conflict, the federal law is supreme over the state law)
Article VII	Ratification	States ratify U.S. Constitution (Anti-Federalist opposition)
Amendments	Amendments to the U.S. Constitution	Bill of Rights: Amendments 1-10 (political rights, rights of those accused of a crime) Voting Rights: Amendments 13, 14 (definition of citizenship, equal protection), 15, 19, 24, 26

