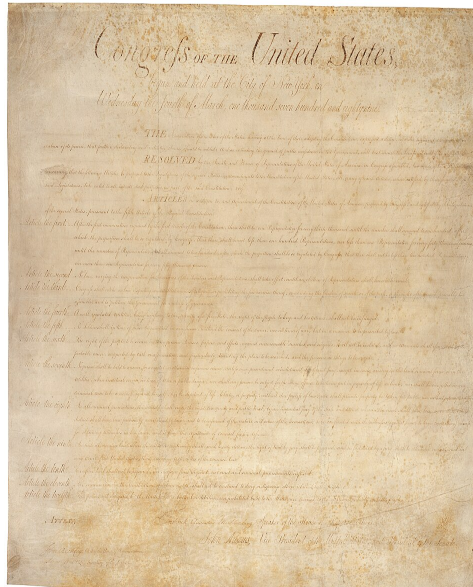




THE BILL OF RIGHTS

All Ten Amendments + Kid-Friendly Summaries

Ratified December 15, 1791 -- Public domain

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About the Bill of Rights

The Bill of Rights is the name for the first ten amendments to the United States Constitution, ratified on December 15, 1791. They were added to guarantee specific freedoms and protections for individuals and to limit the power of the federal government. James Madison drafted them, drawing on ideas from the Virginia Declaration of Rights and English common law. Below is the full text of each amendment along with a kid-friendly summary.

First Amendment

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

Kid-friendly: You can believe what you want, say what you think, write and share your ideas, gather peacefully with others, and ask the government to fix problems.

Second Amendment

A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed.

Kid-friendly: People have the right to own weapons to help keep the country safe and protect themselves.

Third Amendment

No Soldier shall, in time of peace be quartered in any house, without the consent of the Owner, nor in time of war, but in a manner to be prescribed by law.

Kid-friendly: The government cannot force you to let soldiers live in your house.

Fourth Amendment

The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no Warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by Oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized.

Kid-friendly: The police cannot search you or your home or take your things without a good reason and usually a judge's permission.

Fifth Amendment

No person shall be held to answer for a capital, or otherwise infamous crime, unless on a presentment or indictment of a Grand Jury... nor shall be compelled in any criminal case to be a witness against himself, nor be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor shall private property be taken for public use, without just compensation.

Kid-friendly: You have rights if you are accused of a crime. You do not have to testify against yourself, and you must be treated fairly under the law.

Sixth Amendment

In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial, by an impartial jury... and to be informed of the nature and cause of the accusation; to be confronted with the witnesses against him; to have compulsory process for obtaining witnesses in his favor, and to have the Assistance of Counsel for his defence.

Kid-friendly: If you are accused of a crime, you get a fair and speedy trial, a jury, and a lawyer to help you.

Seventh Amendment

In Suits at common law, where the value in controversy shall exceed twenty dollars, the right of trial by jury shall be preserved, and no fact tried by a jury, shall be otherwise re-examined in any Court of the United States, than according to the rules of the common law.

Kid-friendly: In many disagreements about money or property, you have the right to have a jury decide.

Eighth Amendment

Excessive bail shall not be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishments inflicted.

Kid-friendly: Punishments must be fair. The government cannot be cruel or charge you unfairly large amounts of money.

Ninth Amendment

The enumeration in the Constitution, of certain rights, shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people.

Kid-friendly: Just because a right is not listed in the Constitution does not mean you do not have it. People have other rights too.

Tenth Amendment

The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people.

Kid-friendly: Any power the Constitution does not give to the national government belongs to the states or to the people.

Source: The Bill of Rights, 1791. U.S. National Archives. Public domain. Full text at [archives.gov/founding-docs/bill-of-rights-transcript](https://www.archives.gov/founding-docs/bill-of-rights-transcript)