

The Bill of Rights and Amendments 11–27

BEFORE YOU READ

In Articles 4–7, you learned about the process of amending the Constitution.

Now you will learn about the Bill of Rights and the other amendments to the Constitution.

AS YOU READ

Continue your outline of the Constitution. Take notes on how amendments affected the government of the United States.

Amendments 1–10 (The Bill of Rights)	
Amendments 11–27	

TERMS & NAMES

Bill of Rights First ten amendments

double jeopardy Being tried more than once for the same crime

due process of law All the procedures for fair treatment that must be carried out whenever a citizen is accused of a crime

reserved powers Powers not specifically granted to the federal government or denied to the states belong to the states and the people

suffrage Right to vote

The Bill of Rights (pages 266–268)

What liberties are protected by the Bill of Rights?

The first ten amendments are called the **Bill of Rights**. They were added to the Constitution in 1791. The supporters of the Constitution had to promise to include these protections of citizens' rights in order to get enough of the states to ratify the Constitution.

Amendment 1 protects basic civil liberties. It prevents Congress from passing laws limiting citizens' freedom of religion, speech, and press. It says that citizens can assemble, or gather together, freely. Citizens also have the right to ask the government to correct injustices.

Amendment 2 says the federal government cannot prevent the people from having weapons. This amendment was meant to ensure that states and citizens could protect themselves from the military power of a cruel government—as the colonists did during the Revolution. Many people believe that this amendment was meant to protect the right of the states to have armed militias. For this reason, the right of individual citizens to carry weapons has

become controversial in modern times.

Amendment 3 says that citizens cannot be forced to let soldiers stay in their homes during peacetime.

Amendment 4 extends the people's right to privacy. It requires that a search warrant be issued before a citizen's home or belongings can be searched. Such a warrant can be issued only if a judge decides that it is likely that evidence of a crime will be found. The warrant must state exactly what evidence the government is looking for.

Amendment 5 requires that an indictment, or official accusation, be issued before a citizen can be held for a serious crime. It also prevents **double jeopardy**, or being tried more than once for the same crime. In other words, if a citizen is found not guilty in a trial, the government cannot keep bringing the case to trial. (Citizens found guilty do have the right of appeal, however.) This amendment also gives citizens the right to refuse to testify when their own testimony might *incriminate* them. It also guarantees **due process of law**. Due process means that all of the procedures for fair treatment must be carried out whenever a citizen is accused of a crime.

Amendment 6 guarantees the right to a “speedy and public trial.” It is intended to protect citizens from being kept in jail for long periods of time before they are brought to trial. The right to know the charges and to have a lawyer helps citizens defend themselves in court. This amendment also makes sure the people know what is going on in their courts.

Amendment 7 ensures that citizens will have a trial by jury.

Amendment 8 limits the fines and punishments that the government can impose.

Amendment 9 guarantees that rights are not denied to the people simply because they have not been mentioned in the Constitution.

Amendment 10 establishes the so-called **reserved powers**. It states that the powers that are not specifically given to the national government—as long as they are not specifically denied to the states—are reserved for the states and the people.

1. What are two ways the Bill of Rights protects citizens accused of crimes?

Amendments 11–27 (pages 269–277)

How have amendments changed American society?

Amendment 11 (1798) says that citizens of another state or a foreign country cannot sue a state in federal court unless the state agrees to it.

Amendment 12 (1804) changes the way presidents are elected. It kept the Electoral College from the original system. But it created one ballot for president and one for vice-president. The person to get a majority of electoral votes for president becomes president. The person who gets the majority of electoral votes for vice-president becomes vice-president.

Amendment 13 (1865) abolishes slavery.

Amendment 14 (1868) extends the rights of citizenship. It states that all persons born or *naturalized* in any of the United States are citizens of the United States. This was meant to protect African Americans by giving them the same rights as other Americans.

Amendment 15 (1870) states that citizens cannot be prevented from voting on the basis of race, color, or if the person had been a slave. This amendment was initially intended to protect the voting rights of African Americans.

Amendment 16 (1913) gives Congress the power to impose a national income tax.

Amendment 17 (1913) states that senators shall be elected directly by the people rather than by the state legislatures.

Amendment 18 (1919) is known as Prohibition. It banned the manufacture, sale, or shipment of alcoholic beverages. It was repealed by Amendment 21 (1933).

Amendment 19 (1920) grants **suffrage**, or the right to vote, to women.

Amendment 20 (1933) changes the day that a new president takes office. It moved the day from March 4 to January 20 of the year following the election. It also states that Congress shall meet on January 3, every year. Finally, this amendment sets rules for who should act as president if no one has been qualified to do so at the time of the inauguration.

Amendment 22 (1951) sets limits on the number of terms a president may serve. No person may be elected president more than twice.

Amendment 23 (1961) gives the District of Columbia the right to have electors in the Electoral College. It has the same number of electors as if it were a state. But it cannot have more electors than the state with the lowest population.

Amendment 24 (1964) makes poll taxes, charges that need to be paid in order to vote, illegal.

Amendment 25 (1967) sets rules for who should succeed, or take the place of, the president if he or she is unable to perform the duties of the office.

Amendment 26 (1971) extends the right to vote to 18-year olds.

Amendment 27 (1992) states that pay raises for senators and representatives cannot take effect until after the next election for representatives is held.

2. How did Amendments 15, 19, 24, and 26 affect American society?
