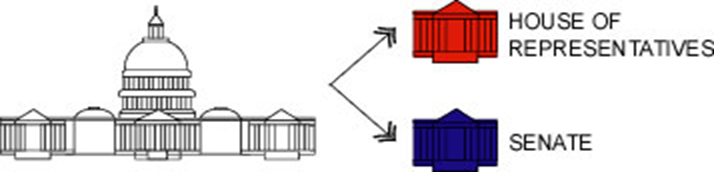
**How is the American government organized**

-- characteristics: check and balances ; the constitution specifies the respective powers of the federal government and of the state government

**The U.S. Congress**



-- The U.S. Congress is made up of two parts：the House of Representatives and the Senate. Congress meets at the U.S. Capitol in Washington, D.C. Its primary duty is to write, debate, and pass bills, which are then passed on to the President for approval.

-- Makes laws controlling trade between states and between the United States and other countries.

-- Makes laws about taxes and borrowing money.

-- Approves the making of money.

-- Can declare war on other countries.

**The House of Representatives**

-- In the House, representation is based on the number of people living in each state. There are a total of 435 representatives in the House.

-- Each member represents an area of the state, known as a congressional district. The number of representatives is based on the number of districts in a state.

-- Therefore, states with larger populations have more representation than states with smaller populations. Each state has at least one congressional district and therefore one representative in the House.

-- Each representative serves a term of 2 years. When the term is over, people from that state may choose to elect a new representative or keep the same one. There is no limit on the number of terms a representative can serve.

-- The House has special jobs that only it can do. It can:

-- Start laws that make people pay taxes.

-- Decide if a government official should be put on trial before the Senate if s/he commits a crime against the country.

**The Senate**

-- Each of the 50 states sends 2 people to the Senate, so there are a total of 100 senators. This means that each state has equal representation in the Senate.

-- Each senator serves a term of 6 years. When their 6 year term is over, the people from that state may choose to elect a new senator or keep the same one. There is no limit on the number of terms a senator can serve.

-- The Senate has special jobs that only it can do. It can:

-- Say yes or no to any treaties the president makes.

-- Say yes or no to any people the president recommends for jobs, such as cabinet officers, Supreme Court justices, and ambassadors.

-- Can hold a trial for a government official who does something very wrong.

**Executive Branch**

-- The executive branch of Government makes sure that the laws of the United States are enacted.

-- The President of the United States is the head of the executive branch of government.

-- This branch is very large so the President gets help from the Vice President, department heads (Cabinet members), and heads of independent agencies.

**Departments & White House**

-- The executive branch consists of 15 departments and many independent agencies；

-- Cabinet is formed by department heads — secretaries；

-- source of advice and assistance to the president

-- President is chief of the executive.

-- first citizen 第一公民

-- his wife—First Lady

**Functions of The President**

As Chief Executive, he is given the authority or duty:

-- to command the armed forces and grant pardons(特赦);

-- to make appointments to certain offices;

-- to conclude treaties(缔约);

-- to send and receive diplomatic and consular officials(外交官和领事官);

-- to inform Congress on the “state of the Union”(国情咨文);

-- to recommend legislation, approve or veto(否决) bills(议案) passed by Congress, and ensure the execution(执行) of laws.

The president’s limits:

-- major appointments with approval of the Senate;

-- veto overridden(拒绝) by Congress with two-thirds consent of the Senators;

-- all appropriations(拨款) legislated(通过立法) by Congress;

-- can be impeached by Congress if abusing power or committing crimes; no power to dismiss Congress;

-- his policy can be vetoed and abolished by the Supreme Court.

**Qualifications of The President**

-- Natural-born American citizen of and over 35 years old;

-- Being resident within US for at least 14 years;

-- Serve one or two successive terms of four years.

-- Franklin D. Roosevelt — the only president who served more than two successive terms

-- After World War II, Congress adopted an amendment limiting a president to two successive terms only.

**Judicial Branch**

-- The Supreme Court heads the judicial branch of the United States government.

-- It is the only court established by the Constitution. Decisions made by the Supreme Court are usually of national importance.

-- "Equal Justice under Law" is the motto of the Supreme Court.

-- The decisions of the Supreme Court are absolute and final; in contrast, the decisions and judgments reached in lower courts may be appealed or questioned.

-- Thousands of requests for rulings reach the Supreme Court each year. Fewer than one hundred fifty are actually considered and ruled upon.

-- All of the other courts in the United States must follow the ruling or the decision made by the justices of the Supreme Court.

-- The Constitution also gives the Supreme Court the power to judge whether federal, state, and local governments are acting within the law.

-- The Supreme Court can also decide if a president's action is unconstitutional.

-- The Supreme Court has a chief justice, or head judge, and eight associate justices.

-- The justices are appointed by the president and approved by a vote of the Senate.

-- The justices serve for life unless they choose to retire. Their job is to interpret laws passed by Congress.

**Two main fears while writing the Constitution**

1. One person or group might become too powerful or be able to seize control of the country. So, there are three branches in the United States government established by the Constitution.

First, the Legislative branch makes the law.

Second, the Executive branch executes the law.

Last, the Judicial branch interprets the law. Each branch

has an effect on the other.

2. The new central government might weaken or take away the power of the state government to run their own affairs.

**Major American Political Parties - what are they?**

**The Democratic Party—liberal;**

Government—playing an important role in the economy and emphasizing full employment;

Favor civil rights laws, a strong social security system and less restrictive abortion laws, etc.;

More disposed to search out a method of living with Russia and China and to look for reduction in arms spending.

**The Republican Party—conservative;**

Favor an economic system—giving enterprises a greater freedom and demand the government to control inflation;

Stress the need for law and order;

Oppose complete free choice of abortion;

Favor a strong military posture and assertive stand in international relations.

**Function of Parties**

-- To nominate candidates for office and help them in their election campaigns.

-- find the most suitable candidates;

-- help candidates to collect the money needed, mobilize the party activists or hire people to help them with the propaganda;

-- urge the public to vote for them and undermine the rivals by exposing their personal flaws or attacking their policies.

**The Election of the President:How dose it work?**

-- There are many kinds of elections in the United States.

-- When an American votes in November in the presidential election, he is voting in several other elections as well:

-- He also votes for a Representative or a Senator;

-- At regular intervals he votes to choose the governor of his state, the mayor of his city and the holders of several local public offices.

**Presidential Election**

-- Only the candidates nominated by the two major parties have the chance to win a Presidential election;

-- The election process is complex;

-- The Presidential election (four stages):

-- The first stage: the major parties hold national conventions to choose candidates for President and Vice-President and to determine the party's platform.

-- The second stage is the campaigning stage.

By early fall the presidential race is on. From that time until the Election Day, voters are bombarded from all sides—by radio, television, newspapers, and personal communications with political materials.

There are whistle stop tours by train, by plane, and by car. The candidate delivers countless speeches and shakes countless hands. This is a very important stage in the general election.

-- The third stage is the time for voters to choose the list of presidential electors for the state.

The number of electors of each state is equal to that of its senators and representatives in Congress.

There are altogether 538 presidential electors, 535 from the states and 3 from the District of Columbia (without seats in Congress).

-- Although the result is already known, the electors still meet in their state capitals and cast their votes for President and vice-President on the first Monday after the second Wednesday in December. That is the fourth stage.

The candidate who win the majority of the 538 votes from the electors (270) is elected President of the United States.

**Untied States Electoral College (总统选举人团)**

-- the system by which the president and vice president of the United States are chosen.

-- President and vice president are elected by "electors" who are chosen by popular vote on a state-by-state basis. The 538 electors compose the United States Electoral College.

--All the candidates of Presidential electors are party nominees. As a result, a voter is actually choosing a President when he casts his vote for an elector.

-- “Winner-Take-All” Principle