

Definition of Democracy:

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- means people's government.
- Democracy = “demos” for people and “kratos” for power/ government.
- Abraham Lincoln: a government of the people, by the people, for the people
- **Direct** (people rule directly) + **Indirect** (someone rules on their behalf /electoral college) — Switzerland closest example of this (where ppl can vote on the laws being created)

Merits

democracy fosters respect for human rights and individual dignity by creating a system where people are treated as valuable members of society

- **A sign of human honor and dignity:** development of a healthy society, awareness of basic human rights, and enhanced dignity of people
- **Political freedom: criticize government, right to peacefully topple the government**
- **Justice and Equality:** brought all citizens irrespective of their economic status to a singular society, with equal opportunities
- **Social Welfare:** basic facilities for all
- **A system of government with a learning environment:** highlights a man's educational, mental, and ethical characteristics. The full opportunity for mutual discussion and collective discussions
- **Strong system of government:** The whole population is involved in government functions and national + international affairs. If the representative's performance is poor, it can be rejected, and the government becomes more responsible and stronger.
- **Defense of the country against the revolution**

democracy prevents revolutions by addressing citizens' needs and grievances through peaceful means

Demerits

slow law making process (getting approval in electoral, debating)

- Everyone given the right to vote without considering their education and awareness: illiterate population
- Ignoring minority rights
- weak system of government since coalitions are formed
- leadership crisis: inexperienced representatives

Origins of Democracy

- **Greek Democracy** (6th century BC): Athens
 - Origin of the word "democracy" from "demos" (people) and "kratein" (to rule).
 - The Greeks practiced a direct democracy where men voted on all issues.
 - It excluded women and slaves, who were not considered citizens.
 - Despite this limitation, the Greek system remains a foundational model for later democracies.

Merits:
Representation of People's Will:
Democracy ensures government is based on the will of the people, through direct voting or representatives.

Protection of Rights:
Democratic systems, influenced by thinkers like Locke, emphasize the protection of fundamental rights such as life, liberty, and equality.

Checks and Balances:
Division of power in systems like the U.S. prevents any one branch from becoming too powerful, limiting the potential for corruption.

Encourages Civic Engagement:
Democracy fosters active participation by citizens in governance.

Adaptability:
Democracies are flexible and can evolve to include previously marginalized groups (e.g., women's suffrage).

- **Roman Influence:**
 - The Roman Empire adopted elements of democracy from the Greeks but was more of a **representative democracy**. indirect
 - Power was shared between the **Senate** (nobility) and **Assembly** (commoners).
 - Thinkers like **Cicero** argued that political power comes from the people and that everyone has inherent rights.
- > Authoritarianism
> Totalitarianism
> Aristocracy
> Autocracy
> Oligarchy
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Democracy in England

- **Magna Carta (1215 AD):**
 - Limited the power of the monarchy and established **Parliament**.
 - Introduced the idea that written laws supersede the king's authority.
 - **Petition of Right (1628) and Bill of Rights (1689):**
 - Further limited the monarchy's powers, requiring parliamentary approval for taxes.
 - Granted **freedom of speech** and banned **cruel or unusual punishment**.
 - **Influence of Philosophers:**
 - **John Locke** (1690) introduced the concept of **natural rights** (life, liberty, property) in *Two Treatises*.
 - **Jean Jacques Rousseau** expanded these ideas in *The Social Contract* (1762), advocating for people's input in government.
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The American and French Revolutions

- **American Revolution (1776):**
 - Influenced by **Locke** and **Rousseau**.
 - The **Declaration of Independence** (by Thomas Jefferson) emphasized equality, the right to life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness.
 - **French Revolution:**
 - Influenced by American ideas, Montesquieu, Voltaire, and Rousseau.
 - Introduced the **Declaration of the Rights of Man**, emphasizing "liberty, property, security, and resistance to oppression."
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Spread of Democracy in Europe and America

- **19th Century Europe:**
 - Monarchies across Western Europe adopted constitutions limiting royal power and developing **representative legislatures**.
- **United States Democracy:**

- The U.S. established a **representative democracy** (democratic republic) to avoid the pitfalls of direct rule.
- Created a **system of checks and balances** between the **Executive, Legislative, and Judicial** branches to prevent corruption.
- Modern American democracy emphasizes continuous improvement towards a more perfect union.