

Title: The Constitution of the United States

Summary:

The **United States Constitution**, ratified in **1787**, is the **foundational legal document** of the U.S. government, establishing its framework, guiding principles, and separation of powers among its branches. It begins with the **Preamble**, which articulates the purposes of governance: to establish justice, ensure domestic tranquility, provide for defense, promote welfare, and secure liberty. The document is divided into **seven articles** that outline the **legislative, executive, and judicial branches**, as well as states' rights, the amendment process, federal supremacy, and the process of ratification.

Article I vests legislative power in a **bicameral Congress**, consisting of the **House of Representatives** and the **Senate**. It details the qualifications and terms for members, the process of making laws, and the enumerated powers of Congress, including taxation, commerce regulation, and war declaration. **Article II** establishes the **executive branch**, led by the **President**, who serves as **Commander-in-Chief** and is responsible for enforcing laws, conducting foreign relations, and overseeing the military. The **Electoral College** system for presidential elections and the process for removal through **impeachment** are also defined. **Article III** creates the **judicial branch**, vesting judicial power in the **Supreme Court** and lower courts, ensuring judicial independence and jurisdiction over federal matters.

The **Bill of Rights** (first **ten amendments**, ratified in 1791) safeguards **individual liberties**, including **freedom of speech, religion, and the press**, the right to bear arms, protection from **unreasonable searches and seizures**, due process rights, and fair trial guarantees. Later amendments expand **civil rights**, abolishing **slavery (13th Amendment)**, **granting citizenship and equal protection (14th Amendment)**, and **ensuring voting rights regardless of race (15th Amendment) and gender (19th Amendment)**. Other amendments adjust **presidential term limits (22nd Amendment)**, redefine **succession (25th Amendment)**, and extend voting rights to **18-year-olds (26th Amendment)**.

The **Supremacy Clause** in **Article VI** declares the **Constitution as the supreme law** of the land, ensuring federal law prevails over conflicting state laws. The **amendment process** in **Article V** requires broad legislative and state approval, allowing for legal evolution while maintaining stability. The **27 amendments** reflect historical shifts in governance, civil rights, and democratic participation, demonstrating the Constitution's **flexibility and enduring relevance** in shaping U.S. law and society.