



The President and the Executive Branch

★ CITIZENSHIP AND YOU ★

The Constitution says very little about what a president is expected to do. The nation's first president, George Washington, established many traditions that shaped the presidency. Contact a federal information center to learn about the various divisions of the Executive Office of the President. Create a brochure to present what you find.

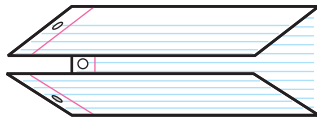


To learn more about the presidency, view the **Democracy in Action** video lesson 8: The Presidency.

FOLDABLES™ Study Organizer

Know-Want-Learn Study Foldable Make this foldable to determine what you already know, what you want to know, and what you learn about the executive branch of government.

Step 1 Fold a sheet of paper into thirds from top to bottom.



Step 2 Turn the paper horizontally, unfold, and label the three columns as shown.

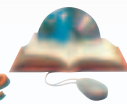
President		
Foreign Policy	Job	Staff & Advisers

Reading and Writing Before you read, write down what you already know and what you want to know under each heading. As you read the chapter, record what you learn.

President George W. Bush and Vice President Dick Cheney get ready to go to a government ceremony. ▶



CIVICS Online



Chapter Overview Visit the *Civics Today* Web site at civ.glencoe.com and click on **Chapter Overviews—Chapter 7** to preview chapter information.



SECTION

1

The President and Vice President

GUIDE TO READING

Main Idea

Every four years, electors selected by popular vote cast their ballots for president and vice president, whose terms of office are established in the United States Constitution.

Key Terms

Electoral College, elector

Reading Strategy

Categorizing Information

As you read, categorize information by completing a chart like the one below with information about the U.S. presidency.

U.S. Presidency		
Qualifications	Background	Term of Office
Election	Salary & Benefits	

Read to Learn

- What qualifications are needed to be president?
- How are presidents elected?
- What are the rules of presidential succession?



Americans in Action

“The presidency of the United States carries with it a responsibility so personal as to be without parallel. . . . No one can make decisions for him. . . . Even those closest to him . . . never know all the reasons why he does certain things and why he comes to certain conclusions. To be President of the United States is to be lonely, very lonely at times of great decisions.”

—Harry S Truman



President Truman

Qualifications for President

Harry S Truman was the thirty-third president of the United States, serving from 1945 to 1953. The president heads the executive branch of the United States government. The presidency is the top political job in the country. Because of the power and global influence of the United States, the president is generally considered to hold the most important job in the world. Our country’s first president was George Washington. Just as the nation has grown tremendously since that time, so has the office of the presidency.

The constitutional requirements for the presidency remain the same as they did when George Washington was president. The U.S. Constitution lists only three rules about who can become president of the United States. A person must be (1) at least 35 years old, (2) a native-born American citizen, and (3) a resident of the United States for at least 14 years. By law, anyone who meets these qualifications can become president. Of course, someone who hopes to become president must have many more qualifications than those three.

So far, every American president has been a white male. All but one have been Protestant Christians. Most have won elections before. Most have had a college education. Many have been lawyers. Most came from states with large populations.

Only in the past few decades has the presidency become a possibility for a wider group of Americans. John F. Kennedy became the first Catholic president in 1960. In 1984 the



Democratic Party nominated Geraldine Ferraro as its first female vice-presidential candidate. Four years later Jesse Jackson, an African American, ran a close second in the race to become the Democratic candidate for president. In 2000 the Democrats nominated Connecticut senator Joseph Lieberman as the first Jewish candidate for vice president.

Electing a President

Presidential elections take place every four years in years evenly divisible by the number 4—for example, 2000, 2004, and 2008. The Constitution does not provide for direct popular election of the president. Instead, it set up an indirect method of election called the **Electoral College**. The Constitution says that each state “shall appoint” **electors**, who then vote for one of the major candidates. Although the ballot will show the names of the presidential candidates, when you vote for a candidate, you are actually voting for a list of presidential electors pledged to that candidate.

Each state has as many electoral votes as the total of its U.S. senators and representatives. The Electoral College includes 538 electors. (Washington, D.C., has three electoral votes.) This means that the states with large populations have many more electoral votes than less populated states. In almost every state, the Electoral College is a “winner-take-all” system. Even if a candidate wins the popular vote by just a tiny majority, that candidate usually gets all of the state’s electoral votes. Candidates thus pay much more attention to these states



John F. Kennedy won the presidency in 1960.

during election campaigns. Even so, the electoral votes of a few small states can decide the outcome of a close election.

To be elected president or vice president, a candidate must win at least 270 of the 538 electoral votes. The winner-take-all system makes it difficult for third-party candidates—candidates not from the two major parties—to win electoral votes.

Although the winning presidential candidate is usually announced on the same evening as the popular election, the formal election by the Electoral College doesn’t take place until December, when the electors meet in each state capital to cast their ballots. Congress counts the electoral votes and declares the winner as the next president. You will read more about the Electoral College system in Chapter 10.

Reading Check **Defining** What is a presidential elector?

Term of Office

Presidents serve four-year terms. Originally the Constitution placed no limits on how many terms a president could serve. The nation’s first president, George Washington, served for eight years, then refused to run for a third term. Presidents followed Washington’s example and no president served more than two terms until 1940, when Franklin D. Roosevelt ran for and won a third term. In 1944 Roosevelt won a fourth term. The Twenty-second Amendment, ratified in 1951, limits each president to two elected terms in office, or a maximum of 10 years if the presidency began during another president’s term.

Salary and Benefits

The president receives a salary of \$400,000 per year, plus money for expenses and travel. The president lives and works



Presidential Succession

- ★ Vice President
- ★ Speaker of the House
- ★ President Pro Tempore of the Senate
- ★ Secretary of State
- ★ Secretary of the Treasury
- ★ Secretary of Defense
- ★ Attorney General
- ★ Secretary of Homeland Security
- ★ Secretary of the Interior
- ★ Secretary of Agriculture
- ★ Secretary of Commerce
- ★ Secretary of Labor
- ★ Secretary of Health and Human Services
- ★ Secretary of Housing and Urban Development
- ★ Secretary of Transportation
- ★ Secretary of Energy
- ★ Secretary of Education
- ★ Secretary of Veterans Affairs

Source: Nelson, Ed. *The Presidency A to Z*, 3rd ed. (Washington, D.C.: CQ Press, 2003).

Evaluating Charts

In 1947 Congress passed a law on the order of succession to the presidency. Who follows the Speaker of the House in succession?

in the White House, which contains a private movie theater, a small gym, a bowling alley, and a heated pool. A White House domestic staff of more than 80 people takes care of the president's family.

In addition, the president has the use of Camp David, a beautiful estate in the Catoctin Mountains of Maryland, about 60 miles north of Washington, D.C. It serves as a retreat and as a place to host foreign leaders. When presidents need to travel, they command a fleet of special cars, helicopters,

and airplanes. For long trips, the president uses *Air Force One*, a specially equipped jet.

Reading Check

Identifying What is the maximum number of years that a U.S. president can serve in office?

The Vice President

The vice president is elected with the president through the Electoral College system. The qualifications for the office are the same as those for the presidency. The Constitution gives little authority to the vice president. Article I states that the vice president shall preside over the Senate and vote in that body in case of a tie.

Vice presidents are usually not very visible to the public. Their activities rarely receive front-page newspaper coverage. Yet, if the president dies, is removed from office, becomes seriously ill, or resigns, the vice president becomes president. Nine vice presidents have become president due to the death or resignation of a president. John Adams, our nation's first vice president, described the situation well. He said,

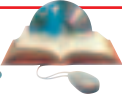
“I am Vice President. In this I am nothing, but I may become everything.”

Presidential Succession

Eight presidents have died while in office. The original wording of the Constitution states that if the president dies or leaves office during his term, the vice president takes on the “powers and duties” of the presidency. Early government officials were not sure what that meant. Should the vice president become president, or should he remain vice president while doing the president's job?



CIVICS Online



Student Web Activity Visit civ.glencoe.com and click on **Student Web Activities—Chapter 7** to learn more about the president and foreign policy.

In 1841 Vice President John Tyler settled the question when William Henry Harrison became the first president to die in office. Tyler declared

himself president, took the oath of office, moved into the White House, and served out the remainder of Harrison’s term.

In 1947 Congress passed the Presidential Succession Act, which indicates the line of succession after the vice president. According to this law, if both the president and vice president die or leave office, the Speaker of the House becomes president. Next in line is the president pro tempore of the Senate, then the secretary of state and other members of the cabinet.

Twenty-Fifth Amendment

Twenty years later, remaining questions about presidential succession were answered with the adoption of a constitutional amendment. The Twenty-fifth Amendment says that if the president dies or leaves office, the

vice president becomes president. The new president then chooses another vice president. Both the Senate and House of Representatives must approve the choice. This amendment also gives the vice president a role in determining whether a president is disabled and unable to do the job. Should that occur, the vice president would serve as acting president until the president is able to go back to work.

The Twenty-fifth Amendment has been used only three times. In 1973 Vice President Spiro Agnew resigned, and President Richard Nixon replaced him with Gerald Ford, a representative from Michigan. When Nixon resigned from the presidency in 1974, Ford became the new president and chose Nelson A. Rockefeller to be his vice president. In 1985 President Ronald Reagan informed Congress that he would need to undergo surgery and be unable to carry out his presidential duties. As a result, Vice President George H.W. Bush served as acting president for about eight hours.

 **Reading Check** **Defining** What was the purpose of the Twenty-fifth Amendment?

SECTION 1 ASSESSMENT



Study Central™ To review this section, go to civ.glencoe.com and click on **Study Central™**.

Checking for Understanding

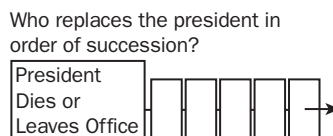
1. Key Terms Write complete sentences about the United States presidency using each of the following terms: **Electoral College**, **elector**.

Reviewing Main Ideas

- 2. Describe** What three qualifications for the U.S. presidency are listed in the Constitution of the United States?
- 3. Identify** What are the constitutional duties of the vice president of the United States?

Critical Thinking

- 4. Making Inferences** What did John Adams mean by saying, “I may become everything”?
- 5. Sequencing Information** In a graphic organizer like the one below, explain the order of presidential succession.



Analyzing Visuals

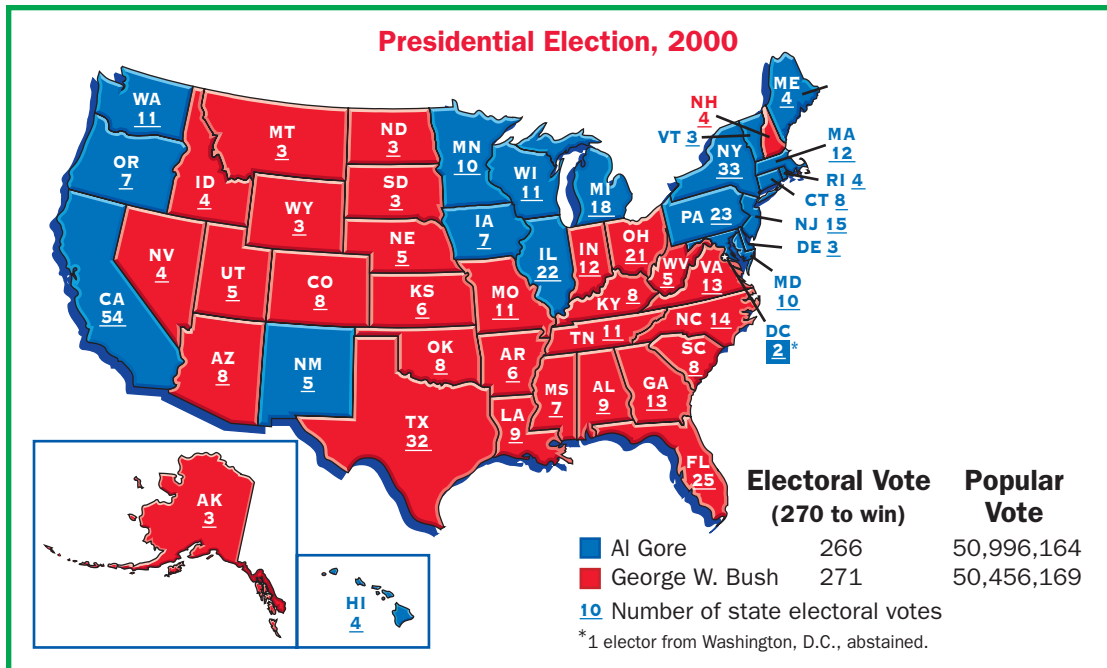
6. Identify Examine the chart—Presidential Succession—on page 168. Who is fifth in line to become president of the United States?

★ BE AN ACTIVE CITIZEN ★

7. Research In the library or on the Internet, research the gubernatorial succession in your state. What is the line of succession if the governor dies or leaves office?

Citizenship SKILLBUILDER

Reading an Election Map



Why Learn This Skill?

Knowing how to read and understand an election map helps you understand an election clearly. It can also help you understand past elections.

Learning the Skill

To read an election map, follow these steps:

- Check the year of the election, most likely noted in the title or the key.
- Study the key. See how the different candidates are represented on the map.
- Note the number of electoral votes each state has. Remember that each state's total number of senators and representatives determines its electoral votes. Its popular vote count is the number of actual voters.
- Study the entire map. Determine voting patterns and trends.

Practicing the Skill

On a separate sheet of paper, answer the following questions about the map on this page.

- 1 How many electoral votes did the state of California have? The state of Texas?
- 2 Which candidate won the election? How many total electoral votes did he win?
- 3 Which candidate won the popular vote?

Applying the Skill

In a history book or encyclopedia, find an election map for the election of 1860. Compare it to the map for the election of 2000. Describe two ways in which the elections were alike and one way in which they were different.



Practice key skills with Glencoe's **Skillbuilder Interactive Workbook CD-ROM, Level 1.**

The President's Job

GUIDE TO READING

Main Idea

In addition to the powers of the office described in the Constitution, the president fills other roles that are important to the functioning of the United States government.

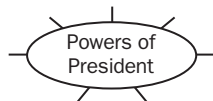
Key Terms

executive order, pardon, reprieve, amnesty

Reading Strategy

Summarizing Information

As you read, in a graphic organizer like the one below, list the powers of the president and give an example of each.



Read to Learn

- What are the powers assigned to the president by the Constitution?
- What are the various roles filled by the president?



Americans in Action

Fewer than 50 men have been able to say what it feels like to be president of the United States. Some former presidents' thoughts are revealing.

"Frankly, being President is rather an unattractive business unless one relishes the exercise of power. That is a thing which has never greatly appealed to me."

—Warren Harding, 1921

"You know, the President of the United States is not a magician who can wave a wand or sign a paper that will instantly end a war, cure a recession, or make a bureaucracy disappear."

—Gerald Ford, 1976



President Warren Harding shakes hands with Babe Ruth.

Constitutional Powers

The president is the most powerful public official in the United States. The U.S. Constitution is the basis of the president's power. Article II says "Executive Power shall be invested in a President . . ." Thus, the president's main job is to execute, or carry out, the laws passed by Congress.

The Constitution also gives the president the power to

- veto, or reject, bills passed in Congress.
- call Congress into special session.
- serve as commander in chief of the armed forces.
- receive leaders and other officials of foreign countries.
- make treaties with other countries (with Senate approval).
- appoint heads of executive agencies, federal court judges, ambassadors, and other top government officials (also subject to Senate approval).
- pardon or reduce the penalties against people convicted of federal crimes.

Because the Constitution requires the president to give Congress information about the "state of the union," the president gives several speeches to Congress each year. The most



important is the State of the Union address every year. In this speech the president comes before a gathering of all members of Congress to discuss the most important issues facing the nation and describe the new program of legislation he would like Congress to take up.

Roles of the President

The president fills a number of different roles. Some of these roles come directly from the Constitution; others are not established in the Constitution but have developed over the years.

Chief Executive

The most important role of the president is carrying out the laws passed by Congress. To do this, the president is in

charge of 15 cabinet departments and the approximately 3 million civilians who work for the federal government. The president appoints the heads of the cabinet departments and of other large government agencies, with the Senate’s approval.

One of the president’s most important tools for carrying out the laws is the power to issue executive orders. An **executive order** is a rule or command that has the force of law. Only Congress has the authority to make laws. Issuing executive orders, however, is generally considered to fall under the president’s constitutional duty to “take care that the laws are faithfully executed.”

Many executive orders deal with simple administrative problems. Some, however, have had a great impact. President Harry S Truman, for instance, used an executive order in 1948 to integrate the armed forces. This gave Americans of all races the opportunity to serve in the armed forces equally.

The Constitution gives the president the power to appoint judges to the Supreme Court and other federal courts. This is an important power because the Supreme Court has the final authority to determine whether a law is acceptable under the Constitution. This power to interpret laws greatly influences life in the United States. Most presidents try to appoint Supreme Court justices who share views similar to their own.

The Constitution also gives the president the power to grant pardons. A **pardon** is a declaration of forgiveness and freedom from punishment. The president may also issue a **reprieve**, an order to delay a person’s punishment until a higher court can hear the case, or grant **amnesty**, a pardon toward a group of people.

Powers and Duties of the President



Evaluating Charts

These symbols show the many roles of the president of the United States. Which is the president’s most important role?



Chief Diplomat

The president directs the foreign policy of the United States, making key decisions about how the United States acts toward other countries in the world.

Commander in Chief

The Constitution makes the president commander in chief of the nation's armed forces. This role gives presidents the ability to back up their foreign policy decisions with force, if necessary. The president is in charge of the army, navy, air force, marines, and coast guard. The top commanders of all these branches of service are subordinate to the president.

Congress and the president share the power to make war. The Constitution gives Congress the power to declare war, but only the president can order American soldiers into battle. Congress has declared war only five times: the War of 1812, the Mexican War, the Spanish-American War, World War I, and World War II. Presidents, however, have sent troops into action overseas more than 150 times since 1789. These situations may threaten the system of checks and balances. For example, although Congress never declared war in Korea or in Vietnam, American troops were involved in conflicts in those countries because they were sent there by U.S. presidents. In 1973, after the Vietnam War, Congress passed the War Powers Resolution. According to this law, the president must notify Congress within 48 hours when troops are sent into battle. These troops must be brought home after 60 days unless Congress gives its approval for them to remain longer or it declares war.

Legislative Leader

Most of the bills Congress considers each year come from the executive branch. Only members of Congress have the power to introduce bills for consideration, but in

practice Congress expects the executive branch to propose the legislation it would like to see enacted.

Every president has a legislative program. These are new laws that he wants Congress to pass. The president makes speeches to build support for this program and meets with key senators and representatives to try to persuade them to support the proposed laws. In addition, the president appoints several staff members to work closely with members of Congress on new laws. The president may also influence legislation by appealing directly to the American people.

The president and Congress have often disagreed over what new laws Congress should adopt. One reason for this is that presidents represent the entire United States, while members of Congress represent only the people of their state or district.

The difference in the length of time that presidents and members of Congress can hold office also contributes to this conflict. While presidents can serve no more than two elected terms, members of Congress can be elected over and over again for decades. Therefore, many members of Congress may not want to move as quickly on programs as the president does.

Head of State

The president is the living symbol of the nation. In this role, the president aids diplomacy by greeting visiting kings and queens, prime ministers, and other foreign leaders. The president also carries out ceremonial functions for Americans, such as lighting the national Christmas tree and giving medals to the country's heroes.

Economic Leader

Every president tries to help the country's economy prosper. Voters expect the president to deal with such problems as unemployment, rising prices, or high taxes.



TIME

Political Cartoons



and it seems to be directed toward money and making the world a more prosperous... Besides, two men with little legs, of course... to be done...

Analyzing Visuals During the Great Depression, President Franklin D. Roosevelt transformed the role of the federal government by spending money on new programs to improve the lives of ordinary people. What does the rabbit symbolize in this cartoon? What comment is the cartoonist making about the impact of government spending?

One key task the president must accomplish each year as economic leader is to plan the federal government’s budget.

Party Leader

The president is generally regarded as the leader of his or her political party. Members of the president’s party work hard to elect the

president. In turn, the president gives speeches to help fellow party members who are running for office as members of Congress, governors, and mayors. The president also helps the party raise money.

Reading Check **Defining** What is a president’s legislative program?

SECTION 2 ASSESSMENT

CIVICS Online Study Central™ To review this section, go to civ.glencoe.com and click on **Study Central**™.

Checking for Understanding

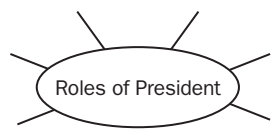
1. Key Terms Define the following terms and use them in complete sentences related to the presidency: **executive order, pardon, reprieve, amnesty.**

Reviewing Main Ideas

- 2. Identify** What duties does the president carry out as commander in chief?
- 3. Describe** What power does the president have that carries the force of law and assists the president in enforcing laws passed by Congress?

Critical Thinking

- 4. Drawing Conclusions** Which of the roles of the president do you think is the most important? Least important? Why?
- 5. Organizing Information** In a web diagram like the one below, classify the roles filled by the president and give an example of each.



Analyzing Visuals

6. Identify Review the chart on page 172. Under which role of the president does a new education bill fall? Tax reform?

★ BE AN ACTIVE CITIZEN ★
7. Use Primary Sources Just as the president delivers a State of the Union address, most governors give a state of the state speech. Read a copy of your governor’s last address and list the roles your governor carries out.

Making Foreign Policy

GUIDE TO READING

Main Idea

In attempting to achieve the nation's foreign policy goals, both the president and Congress have important roles to play.

Key Terms

foreign policy, national security, treaty, executive agreement, ambassador, trade sanction, embargo

Reading Strategy

Comparing and Contrasting As you read, complete a chart like the one below to compare the role of Congress in foreign policy to that of the president.

U.S. Foreign Policy	
Congress	President

Read to Learn

- What are the goals of U.S. foreign policy?
- What are the roles of Congress and the president in conducting foreign policy?



Americans in Action

World events sometimes dictate the nature of the United States's foreign policies. At the same time, the president's views play a role in shaping his administration's approach to foreign affairs. In 1946, President Harry S Truman summed up his foreign policy with these words: "We must have a policy to guide our relations with every country in every part of the world. No country is so remote from us that it may not someday be involved in a matter that threatens the peace. . . . Who knows what may happen in the future? Our foreign policy must be universal."



Protecting American interests abroad

The President and Foreign Policy

A nation's overall plan for dealing with other nations is called its **foreign policy**. The basic goal of American foreign policy is **national security**, the ability to keep the country safe from attack or harm. This goal is essential. No government can effectively meet other important goals, such as better health care or cleaning up the environment, if the nation is under attack.

Another key goal is international trade. In today's global economy, trade with other nations is vital to economic prosperity. Trade can create markets for American products and jobs for American workers.

A third goal is promoting world peace. Even a war far from the United States can disrupt trade and endanger U.S. national security. When other nations are at peace, the United States runs no risk of being drawn into a foreign war.

A fourth goal of foreign policy is to promote democracy around the world. Promoting democracy and basic human rights in other countries encourages peace and thus helps protect our own national security.

"I make American foreign policy," President Harry S Truman declared in 1948. The president is indeed a very important foreign-policy decision maker. Americans and others in the world look to the president to strongly represent our country in foreign affairs.



The president and various White House assistants work with a large foreign-policy bureaucracy in the executive branch. This bureaucracy includes the State Department, the Defense Department, the Central Intelligence Agency, and the National Security Council. These agencies have helped make the president very powerful in foreign affairs. They give the president valuable information. They can carry out presidential decisions around the world. At the same time, presidents must often choose among conflicting advice from these agencies. President Lyndon Johnson complained,

“The State Department wants to solve everything with words, and the generals, with guns.”

The Constitution divides the power to conduct foreign and military affairs between the president and Congress. The president is chief diplomat and commander

in chief, but Congress has the power to declare war, to prohibit certain military actions, and to spend—or withhold—money for defense. The Constitution does not clearly spell out how the legislative and the executive branches can use their powers. As a result, there has always been competition between Congress and the president over who controls foreign policy.

In this struggle, one branch or the other has dominated at various times. After World War II, Congress lost much of its control over foreign policy to the president. Then, in the late 1960s and early 1970s, widespread dislike of the Vietnam War led Congress to try to regain some of its war powers. In starting the American war on global terrorism in 2001, President George W. Bush tipped the balance back toward the presidency.

Tools of Foreign Policy

The president and Congress have several methods they can use to influence other nations and carry out American foreign

The President in Action President Bush comforted a New York City Fire Department member (at right) in September 2001 after a terrorist attack on the World Trade Center. The president greeted military troops at the West Virginia National Headquarters in Charleston. [What executive agencies help President Bush carry out foreign policy?](#)

