

Amending the Constitution - Article V

The Articles of Confederation had been too difficult to amend, or change. Yet, the framers worried, if they made the Constitution too easy to change, it would not be respected. Again, they sought a compromise.

Amendments can be proposed if:

- 2/3 of both the House and Senate approve **OR**
- 2/3 of the state legislatures ask Congress to hold a national convention for proposing amendments

Amendments become part of the Constitutions when they are:

- Ratified (approved) by $\frac{3}{4}$ of the state legislatures **OR**
- Approved by $\frac{3}{4}$ of state conventions called for ratification

Other Important Amendments

The Civil War Amendments

- 13 - Abolished Slavery (1865)
 - Ended slavery in ALL states and territories
 - Congress can pass laws to enforce the amendment and punish violators
- 14 - Civil Rights in the States (1868)
 - Anyone born or naturalized in the U.S. is a citizen of both the state where they live and the United States.
 - No state can pass laws that deprive citizens of due process of law
 - Repealed the 3/5 compromise now that there is no slavery and now the entire population of a state counts towards both taxation and representation
 - Former Confederate officials could not hold public offices in the state or federal government without approval of 2/3 of Congress
 - Debts belonging to the Confederacy or slave owners would not be paid
- 15 - The Right to Vote (1870)
 - The Federal government now determines who has the right to vote
 - The right to vote is extended to African American males
 - The federal government can supervise state elections and end unfair practices like literacy tests. As a result, millions of African Americans registered to vote for the first time.

19th Amendment - Gave women the right to vote (1920)

26th Amendment - Set the minimum age for voting at 18 years old (1971)