

The First 10 Amendments are known as “The Bill of Rights” and were ratified in 1789..

1st Amendment: *Freedom of Religion, Assembly, Speech, Petition, and the Press:* Congress cannot pass laws that take away the freedom to worship as you wish, or limit freedoms of speech, press (the ability to write what you want), to petition the government (getting signatures on paper to show support for a cause), or peacefully assemble/gather and protest. Lying or threatening others is NOT free speech.

2nd Amendment: *Right to Bear Arms-*States can allow people to keep weapons in their homes.

3rd Amendment: *Limits on the Quartering of Soldiers:* People don’t have to allow soldiers to stay in their homes during peacetime, nor in wartime unless a special rule is made by the government.

4th Amendment: *Privacy/Limits on Searches and Seizures:* Unless the government (including the police) has good reason (evidence and a search warrant or probable cause), people, their homes, and their things cannot be searched or taken away.

5th Amendment: *The Right to Due Process of Law, Including Protection against Self- Incrimination*

People don’t have to give evidence against themselves in court or interrogation. (They can be silent and not take the witness stand in a trial) If they have been found innocent of a crime, they can’t be tried again for the same crime. (Double jeopardy) People have to be treated fairly by the law, and **cannot have their lives, liberty, or property taken away from them unless it is fair.** (Due Process) *Habeas Corpus* means that if someone is held by the government then there has to be a good reason to hold them. (Evidence for a trial) Private property cannot be taken for public use, without fair compensation. This is called eminent domain.

6th Amendment: *The Right to Legal Counsel and a Fair Trial:* People accused of a crime can have a lawyer, a trial by jury that is public so people can see it is fair, and all within a reasonable amount of time; without waiting forever in jail. They must be told what they are accused of, they can ask questions about it, and they can call witnesses in a trial on their behalf.

7th Amendment: *The Right to a Trial by Jury in Civil Cases:* If a disagreement between people is about something more than \$20.00, they have the right to a jury trial.

8th Amendment: *Unfair Punishment is Forbidden:* Fines have to be fair. And people found guilty **cannot be punished in a cruel or unusual way** that is not allowed by law.

9th Amendment: *Unlisted Rights of the People:* People have rights besides the ones that are listed in the Constitution. Just because all of the people’s rights aren’t listed, doesn’t mean they can be violated.

10th Amendment: *States’ Rights:* Any powers not explicitly given to the federal government in the Constitution are given to the States and the people.

(Everything above is the Bill of Rights...everything below are amendments that protect the rights of **minorities**)

Amendment 13: *Outlaws Slavery:* Abolishes (ends/destroys) slavery and involuntary servitude. **(Ratified in 1865)**

Amendment 14: *Citizenship and Equal Protection under the law:* Originally gave freed slaves citizenship after the Civil War (Defines birthright citizenship) and guarantees that States must give all citizens **equal rights** and others found in the Bill of Rights. **(Ratified in 1868)**

Amendment 15: *Voting rights for all races:* After the Civil War, this amendment guaranteed that no one could be denied the right to vote because of their race. **(Ratified in 1870)**

Amendment 19: *Women’s Suffrage:* Women are given the right to vote. **(Ratified in 1920)**

Amendment 24: *Outlaws Poll Taxes:* States can no longer force citizens to pay taxes in order to vote. **(Ratified in 1964)**

Amendment 26: *Younger voting age:* The draft lottery for selective service was very unpopular during the Vietnam War. “Old enough to fight, old enough to vote” became the rallying cry of anti-war protesters and draft dodgers. In 1971, Congress proposed, and states ratified, this amendment which changed the voting age from 21 to 18. **(Ratified in 1971)**