

Bill of Rights in the Original Language

First Amendment: Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

Second Amendment: A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed.

Third Amendment: No Soldier shall, in time of peace be quartered in any house, without the consent of the Owner, nor in time of war, but in a manner to be prescribed by law.

Fourth Amendment: The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no Warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by Oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized.

Fifth Amendment: No person shall be held to answer for a capital, or otherwise infamous crime, unless on a presentment or indictment of a Grand Jury, except in cases arising in the land or naval forces, or in the Militia, when in actual service in time of War or public danger; nor shall any person be subject for the same offence to be twice put in jeopardy of life or limb; nor shall be compelled in any criminal case to be a witness against himself, nor be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor shall private property be taken for public use, without just compensation.

Sixth Amendment: In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial, by an impartial jury of the State and district wherein the crime shall have been committed, which district shall have been previously ascertained by law, and to be informed of the nature and cause of the accusation; to be confronted with the witnesses against him; to have compulsory process for obtaining witnesses in his favor, and to have the Assistance of Counsel for his defence.

Seventh Amendment: In suits at common law, where the value in controversy shall exceed twenty dollars, the right of trial by jury shall be preserved, and no fact tried by a jury, shall be otherwise reexamined in any Court of the United States, than according to the rules of the common law.

Eighth Amendment: Excessive bail shall not be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishments inflicted.

Ninth Amendment: The enumeration in the Constitution, of certain rights, shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people.

Tenth Amendment: The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people.

Bill of Rights in Plain English

1. The US government will not make laws that: **1)** favor any religion; **2)** restrict how people worship; **3)** limit the speech of citizens or the media; **4)** stop peaceful protest against the government.
2. Citizens have the right to own guns and other weapons.
3. In peace time or even during war citizens will not be required to house soldiers.
4. Law officials (like police) must present a warrant for search or seizure of private property (homes, for example).
5. No person can be tried for a major crime unless charged by a *Grand Jury*; a person is not allowed to be on trial twice for the same crime (This is called *double jeopardy*); no one can be required to testify against themselves (This is called *taking the fifth*); and no person can be sentenced to prison or death without a trial.
6. Any citizen accused of a crime will be allowed to have a jury trial to prove his or her innocence, and defendants will have the option of assistance of a lawyer.
7. Any lawsuits that go to court that are above twenty dollars must allow a person to request a jury trial.
8. Unreasonable fines will not be required nor will cruel or unusual punishments be administered for citizens convicted of crimes.
9. The rights of citizens do not have to be listed in the Constitution to be protected.
10. A state or its citizens can make laws about anything that the Constitution does not list as a Federal power.