

AP United States Government and Politics Cheat Sheet

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Unit 1: The Global Tapestry

- **Declaration of Independence:** Drafted by Jefferson, laid the foundation for U.S. sovereignty.
- **Articles of Confederation:** Weak government led to inefficiency and unresolved disputes.
- **Types of Representative Democracies:**
 - Participatory: Strong civil society.
 - Pluralist: Multiple interest groups.
 - Elite: Limited participation.
- **Checks and Balances:** Explained in Federalist No. 51.
- **Constitutional Compromises**
 - Great Compromise: Bicameral Congress.
 - Electoral College: A compromise for electing the President.
 - Three-Fifths Compromise: Representation and taxation based on the slave population.

Additional Notes:

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Unit 2: Branches of Government

• Congress

- Bicameral with Senate (equal state representation) and House of Representatives (population-based).
- Enumerated powers: Declaring war, passing the budget, raising revenue.
- Legislation can pass with a simple majority; constitutional amendments need a supermajority.
- Filibuster: Can be ended with cloture (three-fifths vote).

• **Checks and Balances:** Explained in Federalist No. 51.

• Constitutional Compromises

- Great Compromise: Bicameral Congress.
- Electoral College: A compromise for electing the President.
- Three-Fifths Compromise: Representation and taxation based on the slave population.

• President:

- Powers include vetoing laws, appointing officials, and being the Commander-in-Chief

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Unit 3: Civil Liberties & Civil Rights

- **Bill of Rights:** First 10 amendments guaranteeing individual rights.
- **Key Protections**
 - Freedom of Speech/Press.
 - Right to Bear Arms.
 - Due Process Clause: Fair procedures (5th & 14th Amendments).
 - Rights of the Accused: Right to trial, silence, and counsel.
- **Miranda Rights:** Police must inform individuals of their rights before questioning.
- **Equal Protection Clause:** Equal legal protection under state jurisdiction.

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Unit 4: American Political Ideologies & Beliefs

- **Political Socialization:** Process by which people acquire political beliefs.
- **Public Opinion Polls:**
 - Opinion polls, benchmark polls.
- **Parties**
- **Democratic:** Liberal views.
- **Republican:** Conservative views.
- **Political Ideologies:**
 - Liberal: Supports government intervention in the economy.
 - Conservative: Favors free market, limited government.
 - Libertarians: Limited government beyond property protection.

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Unit 5: Political Participation

• **Types of Voting:**

- Rational Choice, Retrospective, Prospective, Party-line Voting.

• **Political Efficacy:** Belief in influencing political outcomes.

• **Linkage Institutions:** Channels between citizens and government (parties, media, interest groups).

• **Presidential Elections:**

- Primaries/Caucuses: Select candidates.
- Party Conventions: Nominate candidates

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Key Required Documents & SCOTUS Cases

- **Federalist No. 10:** Advocates a strong central government.
- **Brutus No. 1:** Argues for small government.
- **Key SCOTUS Cases:**
 - Marbury v. Madison: Judicial review.
 - McCulloch v. Maryland: Federal law supremacy.
 - United States v. Lopez: Limits on the commerce clause.
 - Brown v. Board of Education: School segregation violates equal protection.
 - Gideon v. Wainwright: Right to an attorney.
 - Citizens United v. FEC: Corporate political spending allowed.

Additional Notes: