



## The Presidency Flashcards

*Part of the AP U.S. Government collection*

### Overview

This resource contains a collection of 38 flashcards that will help students master key Presidency concepts that may be covered on the AP U.S. Government exam.

These are not actual test questions, nor do they involve much “application” of knowledge. Instead, they focus on the basic factual and conceptual knowledge that students must first internalize if they are to successfully formulate logical responses to multiple-choice or essay questions on the eventual exam.

Brainscape has created this content in partnership with several AP U.S. Government teachers and tutors, as well as ex-executives from test prep publishers such as Kaplan and The Princeton Review. The material is as comprehensive as possible, while still being broken down into small bite-sized chunks that make it easy to study. We have included a variety of question formats to help students’ minds encode the knowledge as deeply as possible.

### How to Use This Resource

Teachers and students can use these flashcards in a variety of creative ways. Below are a few common use cases:

1. Post this PDF on your class website, so students can download it on their own, and potentially print their own copy as a study aid (and even *cut out* individual flashcards)
2. Use these questions as inspiration for your own quiz questions
3. Use these flashcards as a “game”, where one student (or group of students) asks another student (or group) a random question, and keeps score of how well the questions are being answered
4. Encourage students to use the digital version of the flashcards (see below)

### Online and Mobile Version

All of these flashcards are available to study on the Brainscape website ([brainscape.com](https://brainscape.com)) and in our mobile app(s). Brainscape’s “smart flashcards” study system uses our unique “Confidence-Based Repetition” method, which repeats questions in a progressive pattern based on students’ personalized path of mastery. Teachers can track students’ progress and identify students who need more guidance.

Students can study a portion of Brainscape’s premium flashcards for FREE and can gain unlimited access for a small fee. Students can also use Brainscape to create & share their own supplementary flashcards (which is ALWAYS FREE).

If you are interested in a bulk class license for Brainscape’s web & mobile study system, please contact [info@brainscape.com](mailto:info@brainscape.com), and we can set up some time for a call.

#	Question	Answer
1	What are the three Constitutional requirements to be president?	<p>Under the Constitution, the president must be:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. at least 35 years old</li> <li>2. a natural-born citizen of the United States</li> <li>3. a resident of the United States for at least 14 years</li> </ol>
2	How long is the president's term in office?	<p>The president's term is four years.</p> <p>The founders chose a four-year term as part of the safeguards built into the Constitution. To make sure any change is gradual, senators serve six years, the president four years, and representatives two years.</p>
3	What limit did the 22nd Amendment place on the presidency?	<p>The 22nd Amendment states that no person may be elected to the presidency more than twice.</p> <p>In addition, if the president succeeded to the office to fulfill another president's term and served more than two years in fulfillment of that term, then that person is only eligible for one term in office.</p>
4	Before passage of the 25th Amendment, what did the Constitution provide in case of death, disability, or removal of a sitting president?	<p>As originally written, the Constitution provided that in the event of death or disability of a president, the vice president would carry out the duties of the office.</p> <p>Interestingly, the Constitution as originally written does not specifically say that the vice president becomes president. William Henry Harrison was the first president to die in office, and John Tyler assumed both the duties of the presidency and the title, setting a precedent for the future.</p>
5	Pursuant to the 25th Amendment, if a vice president becomes president due to the death, disability, or removal of the president, how is the vice presidency filled?	<p>Under the 25th Amendment, the new president nominates a successor, who takes office when confirmed by a majority vote in each house of Congress.</p>

#	Question	Answer
6	The 25th Amendment provides that if the president is unable to perform his duties, the vice president becomes the "acting president." What are the two ways in which a presidential disability can be declared?	<p>A presidential disability can be declared if:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. the vice president and a majority of the cabinet inform Congress that a disability exists</li> <li>2. the president informs Congress a temporary disability exists</li> </ol> <p>The presidential disability provision has been invoked twice, by President Ronald Reagan and President George W. Bush, who each underwent short medical procedures.</p>
7	Under the 25th Amendment, after a state of disability is declared, when may the president resume office?	<p>The president may resume office upon informing Congress that the disability has ended. If the vice president and a majority of the cabinet disagree that the disability has ended, they may inform Congress.</p> <p>Congress then decides whether a disability exists by voting within 21 days. A two-thirds majority is required to declare a disability.</p>
8	Under the Presidential Succession Act of 1947, what is the order of presidential succession?	<p>Under the Presidential Succession Act, the order of succession is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• vice president</li> <li>• Speaker of the House</li> <li>• president pro tempore of the Senate</li> <li>• cabinet officers based on the date their department was created (the Secretary of State being the most senior, the Secretary of Homeland Security being the least senior)</li> </ul>
9	Which house of Congress has the authority to impeach a president or vice president?	<p>A president or vice president is subject to impeachment by the House of Representatives for "treason, bribery, or other high crimes and misdemeanors."</p> <p>Only two presidents, Andrew Johnson and Bill Clinton, have been impeached.</p> <p>High crimes and misdemeanors is an English phrase dating from the 1300s, and refers to acts such as misappropriating government funds or arresting persons to prevent their seeking office in Parliament.</p>

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10	Once the House of Representatives impeaches a president or vice president (or any other federal official or judge), what action does the Senate take?	<p>If a president or vice president is impeached, the Senate sits in judgment, presided over by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. If two thirds of senators vote to remove the president or vice president, they are removed from office.</p> <p>Although eight federal judges have been formally removed, the Senate has never removed a president or vice president.</p>
11	What function does the Electoral College perform?	<p>The Electoral College officially elects the president and vice president because voters do not technically vote for the president or vice president. Rather, once a state votes, pre-pledged electors provide electoral votes for the winner of the popular vote in the state.</p> <p>Exceptions exist in Maine and Nebraska, where electoral votes are cast by congressional district.</p>
12	How are the number of electoral votes for each state determined?	<p>Each state receives as many electoral votes as its combined total of senators and representatives. At a minimum each state gets three electoral votes. Larger states have proportionately more electoral votes because a state's House delegation is determined by population,</p> <p>In addition, the District of Columbia receives three electoral votes, making a total of 538. The requirement for a majority is 270 electoral votes.</p>
13	When do electors meet and vote?	<p>Electors meet and vote in December in their respective state capitals. Their votes are sealed, and sent to Congress, where they are counted in January.</p>
14	What happens if no presidential candidate receives a majority of the electoral votes?	<p>If no presidential candidate receives the 270 electoral votes necessary to have a majority, the House of Representatives chooses a president from among the top three candidates. Voting is done by state delegation as a unit.</p>
15	What happens if no vice presidential candidate receives a majority of the electoral votes?	<p>If no vice presidential candidate receives the 270 electoral votes necessary to have a majority, the Senate chooses a vice president from among the top two candidates.</p>

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16	How did the 12th Amendment modify the electoral college?	As written, the Constitution provided that electors cast two votes for president, the person receiving the most electoral votes would become president, and the second-place finisher, vice president. Thus, Thomas Jefferson served as John Adams's vice president, though the two men were of different parties. The 12th Amendment provided that electors would cast one vote for president, and one vote for vice president.
17	Under the Constitution, what tasks belong to the vice president?	Constitutionally, the vice president advises Congress if a presidential disability exists and presides over the Senate. The only time in which the vice president may cast a vote in the Senate is if there is a tie.  Expressing frustration with the limited power, vice president John Nance Garner stated the office was "not worth a glass of warm piss."
18	What executive powers does the president possess?	The president's executive powers include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• appointing and removing officials</li> <li>• presiding over cabinet meetings</li> <li>• enforcing laws, treaties, and judicial decisions</li> <li>• assuming emergency powers</li> <li>• issuing executive orders</li> </ul>
19	What is a veto message?	When the president vetoes a bill, he will often include an explanation as to why he vetoed the bill, known as a veto message. The message can include suggested changes, or a request that Congress not override the veto.
20	Define: pocket veto	Under the Constitution, the president has 10 days (not including Sundays) to either sign or veto a bill before it becomes law. If less than 10 days remain in the congressional session, the president need only "pocket" the bill, by neither signing nor vetoing it, and it doesn't become law.  To forestall a pocket veto, Congress routinely designates agents to receive a presidential veto, a practice upheld by the Supreme Court.

#	Question	Answer
21	What is the line-item veto?	<p>The line-item veto would enable presidents to veto parts of a bill they find objectionable, or unconstitutional, rather than having to decide between approving or vetoing a bill.</p> <p>In 1996, Congress passed the Line-Item Veto Act, which was struck down by the Supreme Court on constitutional grounds. Therefore, the president cannot exercise a line-item veto.</p>
22	What is a signing statement?	<p>When a president signs a bill into law, he or she may attach a signing statement, to express the belief that portions of the bill are unconstitutional.</p> <p>Signing statements carry little de jure authority.</p>
23	The president is responsible for treaty negotiations. When do these treaties become binding?	<p>Treaties only become binding when approved by two-thirds of the Senate.</p> <p>In lieu of the time-consuming treaty process, numerous presidents have employed executive agreements, agreements between the president and another head of state, which are not binding on their successors in office.</p>
24	How do the presidents exercise legislative powers?	<p>Presidents exercise legislative powers by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• issuing the annual budget</li> <li>• giving an annual State of the Union Address</li> <li>• proposing legislation</li> <li>• signing or vetoing legislation</li> <li>• calling for a special session of Congress</li> </ul>
25	The president is referred to as the _____, recognizing his supremacy over the military.	<p>Commander in Chief</p> <p>A hallmark of the United States' system has been the subordination of the military to civilian control, represented by the role of the president as a civilian in charge of the military.</p>

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26	How did the War Powers Resolution of 1973 limit the president's military powers?	<p>The War Powers Resolution of 1973 allows the president to send U.S. forces abroad only with congressional authorization, or in the case of a national emergency created by an attack on the United States (including its territories and possessions), or an attack on the armed forces.</p> <p>The president must notify Congress within 48 hours of committing troops, and troops may not remain longer than 60 days (plus a 30 day withdrawal period) without a declaration of war or congressional authorization.</p>
27	What judicial powers does the president exercise?	<p>By design, the president's judicial powers are limited to ensure the independence of the judicial branch. However, the president appoints judges to the federal bench (with Senate approval), and can grant amnesty, reprieves, and pardons.</p> <p>Some presidents, such as Zachary Taylor and Barack Obama, asserted that they did not have to enforce Court decisions or laws they deemed unconstitutional, which is a further example of their judicial power.</p>
28	Define: bully pulpit	The term "bully pulpit" refers to the president's use of the power and dignity of his office to command the attention of the American people, and draw their attention to a particular problem, policy, or concern.
29	What is the coattail effect?	The coattail effect is when popular candidates, usually the president, help other members of their party get elected to office. Depending on the popularity of the president and his/her policies, lesser-known candidates may seek support for their campaigns in the form of endorsements and/or personal visits.
30	Beginning with George Washington, presidents have claimed executive privilege. What does the privilege entail?	<p>Executive privilege allows presidents and executive branch members to avoid congressional or judicial subpoenas. It is often justified by a claim that presidents must be able to count upon free and unfettered advice from their subordinates in order to perform their constitutionally required duties.</p> <p>George Washington claimed executive privilege to prevent notes from John Jay's treaty negotiations with Great Britain from being turned over to Congress.</p>

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31	How did the Supreme Court limit the concept of executive privilege in U.S. v. Nixon (1974)?	In U.S. v. Nixon, Congress sought tape recordings made by President Richard Nixon. The president invoked executive privilege. The Supreme Court held that executive privilege was not absolute, and that instead it must be balanced with the larger public interest. Forced to turn over the tapes, Nixon resigned 15 days later.
32	Define: executive orders	Executive orders are directives or rules issued by the president that have the full force of law. They are generally used to modify administrative workings of federal agencies. However, they can also enforce legislative statues, foreign treaties, and the Constitution.  As an example, President Truman used an executive order to integrate the military, which as president, was under his command.
33	Define: impoundment	Impoundment is the presidential practice of not spending funds that were appropriated to a federal department or agency, typically because of policy disagreements with Congress.  Congress disallowed impoundments in the Budget Reform Act of 1974, which requires the president to advise Congress if the funds remain unspent. Congress, with the power of the purse, asserted its right of appropriations.
34	Traditionally, how often does the president "give to Congress information of the State of the Union and recommend to their Consideration such measures as he shall judge necessary and expedient"?	The Constitution states in Article II, Section 3 that the president shall do so from "time to time," but traditionally presidents do so once a year, an event known as the State of the Union Address.  Originally, the State of the Union Address was provided to Congress in written form, but since the early 1900s most presidents have delivered it in person.
35	What presidential power was confirmed in Humphrey's Executor v. United States (1935)?	In Humphrey's Executor v. United States, the Supreme Court confirmed the power of the president to remove members of a quasi-judicial or quasi-legislative branch created by Congress.  The case arose when President Roosevelt attempted to remove a member of the Federal Trade Commission for not supporting Roosevelt's New Deal policies.

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36	In <i>Myers v. United States</i> (1927), the Supreme Court confirmed the president's power to remove officials from what branch of the federal government?	<p>In <i>Myers v. United States</i>, the Court confirmed the power of the president to remove executive branch officials without congressional approval.</p> <p><i>Myers</i>, a postmaster in Oregon, had been terminated by the president, an act that was illegal under federal law at the time. The Court held that the federal law was unconstitutional, and that the president could exercise his removal power.</p>
37	How did the Supreme Court limit the power of the president in <i>Youngstown Sheet &amp; Tube v. Sawyer</i> (1952)?	<p>In <i>Youngstown Sheet</i>, the Court held that the president could not order the seizure of private property absent specifically enumerated authority under Article II of the Constitution, or statutory authority provided by Congress.</p> <p>The case resulted from the seizure of steel plants by President Truman in 1952 during the Korean War. The plants had been subject to a strike, and President Truman sought to operate them without the management's consent because steel was an important war industry.</p>
38	Which Amendment changed the date upon which the president is sworn into office?	<p>The 20th Amendment was enacted in 1933, and moved the date the president begins his term from March 4th to January 20th. The Amendment also established that a new Congress begins on January 3rd.</p> <p>The Amendment has earned the nickname "lame duck" because it shortens the time between the date when new presidents and congressmen are elected, and the time they leave office, when they are known as lame ducks.</p>