

# Key Principles of the Constitution

*From Common Core Basics*

<b>Principle</b>	<b>What it Means</b>
Popular Sovereignty	The governments gets its power and authority from the people.
Federalism	Power is shared between state and national governments.
Separation of Powers	Responsibilities are shared among three branches of government, each with its own powers.
Checks and Balances	Each of the branches of government has some control over the other.
Judicial Review	The judicial branch (the courts) can declare a law passed in Congress or an action taken by the president to be unconstitutional.
Limited Government	The national government can do only what the Constitution specifically states it can do.
Natural Rights philosophy	Government has authority only because the people give it authority to protect natural rights.
Constitutionalism	A constitution limits a government's power.
Majority rule and minority rights	The majority rules, but it must respect and protect the rights of individuals.
Rule of law	Laws are clear and fair, and no one is above the law--not even the government.
Individual rights	All people naturally have certain individual rights, such as life, liberty and property.