

## 10 Fast Facts on the Constitution

1. The U.S. Constitution was written in the same Pennsylvania State House where the Declaration of Independence was signed and where George Washington received his commission as Commander of the Continental Army. Now called Independence Hall, the building still stands today on Independence Mall in Philadelphia, directly across from the National Constitution Center.
2. Written in 1787, the Constitution was signed on September 17th. But it wasn't until 1788 that it was ratified by the necessary nine states.
3. The U.S. Constitution was prepared in secret, behind locked doors that were guarded by sentries. The primary aim of the Constitution was to create a strong elected government that was responsive to the will of the people, although there was some controversy over this. Many of the Founding Fathers believed that the new government needed to be insulated from the will of the people.
4. Some of the original framers and many delegates in the state ratifying conventions were very troubled that the original Constitution lacked a description of individual rights. In 1791, Americans added a list of rights to the Constitution. The first ten amendments became known as The Bill of Rights.
5. Of the 55 delegates attending the Constitutional Convention, 39 signed and 3 delegates dissented. Two of America's "founding fathers" didn't sign the Constitution. Thomas Jefferson was representing his country in France and John Adams was doing the same in Great Britain.
6. Established on November 26, 1789, the first national "Thanksgiving Day" was originally created by George Washington as a way of "giving thanks" for the Constitution.
7. Of the written national constitutions, the U.S. Constitution is the oldest and shortest.
8. At 81, Benjamin Franklin of Pennsylvania was the oldest delegate at the Constitutional Convention and at 26, Jonathon Dayton of New Jersey was the youngest.
9. The original Constitution is on display at the National Archives in Washington, D.C. When the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor, it was moved to Fort Knox for safekeeping.
10. More than 11,000 amendments have been introduced in Congress. Thirty three have gone to the states to be ratified and twenty seven have received the necessary approval from the states to actually become amendments to the Constitution.