

Reference Card

Executive Branch



KEY POWERS:

1. **Commander-in-Chief** – Serves as the head of the armed forces.
2. **Faithful Execution of Laws** – Ensures that the laws of the United States are faithfully executed.
3. **Executive Orders** – Issues executive orders to direct the operations of the federal government.
4. **Grant Pardons and Reprieves** – Can pardon individuals or commute sentences for federal crimes (except in cases of impeachment).
5. **Appoint Executive Officials** – Nominates Cabinet members, agency heads, and other federal officers (with Senate confirmation).
6. **Veto Power** – Can reject bills passed by Congress; Congress can override the veto with a two-thirds vote in both the House and Senate.
7. **State of the Union Address** – Provides Congress with information on the state of the union and recommends legislation.
8. **Special Sessions** – Can call Congress into a special session.
9. **Appoint Judges** – Nominates federal judges, including Supreme Court justices (with Senate confirmation).
10. **Make Treaties** – Negotiates treaties, but the Senate must ratify them.
11. **Appoint Ambassadors** – Nominates ambassadors, but the Senate must confirm them.

Reference Card

Judicial Branch



KEY POWERS:

1. **Interpret Laws**: Decides what laws mean and if they follow the Constitution.
2. **Federal Cases**: Handles cases about the Constitution, federal laws, and treaties.
3. **State Disputes**: Solves conflicts between states.
4. **Ambassador Cases**: Deals with legal issues involving ambassadors.
5. **Lifetime Appointments**: Judges serve for life unless they retire or are removed.
6. **Judicial Review**: Can declare laws or actions unconstitutional (started with *Marbury v. Madison*).
7. **Impeachment Trials**: The Chief Justice leads trials if the president is impeached.
8. **Court Orders**: Issues rulings that can enforce or block government actions.
9. **Limit Power**: Can stop actions by the president or Congress if they break the Constitution.

Reference Card

Legislative Branch



KEY POWERS:

1. **Make Laws:** Writes and passes laws.
2. **Raise Taxes:** Collects money to fund the government.
3. **Coin Money:** Decides how money is made and its value.
4. **Regulate Trade:** Manages business between states and other countries.
5. **Declare War:** Decides if the U.S. goes to war.
6. **Maintain Armed Forces:** Provides money and rules for the military.
7. **Create Post Offices:** Sets up and runs the postal system.
8. **Set Immigration Rules:** Decides how people can become U.S. citizens.
9. **Create Lower Courts:** Establishes federal courts below the Supreme Court.
10. **Elastic Clause:** Can make any laws needed to carry out its powers.
11. **Override Vetoes:** Can cancel a president's veto with a two-thirds vote.
12. **Impeach the President:** The House can accuse the president of crimes; the Senate holds the trial.
13. **Confirm Appointments:** The Senate approves the president's choices for important jobs.
14. **Ratify Treaties:** The Senate must agree to treaties made by the president.
15. **Control Spending:** Decides how money is spent by the government.
16. **Propose Amendments:** Can propose amendments to overturn judicial decisions or adjust government powers.
17. **Investigate the Executive Branch:** Can hold hearings and check government actions.

