

## The Rights of the People – Bill of Rights



After the Framers wrote the Constitution, the people in the states had to approve it. They did, but many people said the Constitution did not say enough about protecting people's rights. They believed that people are born with rights to life, liberty, and property. The people remembered that the king of England had tried to take away these rights. They thought the Constitution had to protect these rights from the new U.S. government.

Shortly after the Constitution went into effect, the people added ten amendments. The first ten amendments, or additions, to the Constitution were ratified in 1791. These amendments are called the **Bill of Rights**. The Bill of Rights describes rights and privileges of U.S. citizens that the government cannot take away from the people.



The rights mentioned in the **First Amendment** include *freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of religion, freedom to petition, and freedom to assemble, or meet*. The Bill of Rights also guarantees the right to bear arms – the right of citizens to own weapons. Other amendments describe the kind of trial a person who is accused of a crime can expect. The Ninth Amendment states that the rights listed above are not the only rights the people have. The Tenth Amendment says that any power not given to the United States by the Constitution, other than those powers that are against the law, are given to the individual states.

Between 1795 and 1992, seventeen other amendments were added to the Constitution. There are currently a total of twenty-seven amendments. The Bill of Rights protects individuals. It is a document that limits the power of the federal government.

## Anticipation Guide

**Directions:** Before reading answer true or false to the following statements. Then, after reading, answer the questions again. Correct each false statement in the last column.

Before	Statement	After	Corrections
<i>Circle One</i>		<i>Circle One</i>	Correct each false statement.
True/False	There are 10 amendments in the Bill of Rights.	True/False	
True/False	There are 4 freedoms listed in the first amendment.	True/False	
True/False	There will be no more amendments added to the Constitution.	True/False	
True/False	The Bill of Rights guarantee that all people shall be protected equally by the laws.	True/False	
True/False	The amendments to the Constitution were ratified in 1800.	True/False	
True/False	We still use the Bill of Rights today.	True/False	