

Powers and Duties of the President

(See Article II, Section 2.3)

The job of the President is not an easy one. The Constitution spells out many different responsibilities, powers, and duties of the President and the executive branch. The powers of the President can be put into five categories: Commander in Chief, Chief Executive, Chief of State, Chief Legislator, and Chief of Party.

First, the President is the Commander in Chief of the United States Armed Forces. He is the number one military person in the United States. All decisions regarding the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marines are the responsibility of the President. He can also call the National Guard (or state militias) from the individual states into the service of the United States.

Secondly, the President is the Chief Executive. To run a country the size of the United States, you need many people doing many things. It is the job of the President as Chief Executive to make sure all of his cabinet, staff, and other employees are doing their jobs correctly.

The President is also the Chief of State. This responsibility was given to the President by the Constitution so that the United States would have one person in charge of all foreign relations. The President represents the United States when he or she travels to other countries to meet with foreign leaders. The President also greets and hosts other foreign dignitaries when they visit the United States. The President may also make treaties with other countries, but the Senate must ratify, or approve, the treaty by a two-thirds vote.

Another duty of the President is that of Chief Legislator. We saw in Article 1 how the President had the power to veto laws. The Constitution gives the President the power to approve or disapprove of the laws that Congress is making. He can also suggest that certain laws be made by working with his supporters in the House or the Senate.

Finally, the President is also the Chief of Party. When he is elected President, he becomes the head of his political party, Republican or Democratic. He makes decisions regarding the make-up of his individual political party.



The President is the Commander in Chief of the armed forces, and he periodically inspects the troops.

THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH

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≈ Challenges ≈

1. What are the five categories that the powers of the President can be put into?

- a) _____
- b) _____
- c) _____
- d) _____
- e) _____

2. What is the President's responsibility to the United States Military? a) What is his title, and b) what can he do?

- a) _____
- b) _____

3. What is the President's responsibility to the business aspect of the United States government? a) What is his title, and b) what can he do?

- a) _____
- b) _____

4. What is the President's responsibility to the aspect of foreign relations? a) What is his title, and b) what can he do?

- a) _____
- b) _____

5. What is the President's responsibility to approve, disapprove, or suggest laws? a) What is his title, and b) what can he do?

- a) _____
- b) _____

6. What is the President's responsibility to his political party? a) What is his title, and b) what can he do?

- a) _____
- b) _____