

## Political Systems Are About Control

[Republic](#) has government control by the people.

[Commonwealth](#) community founded for the common good.

[Oligarchy](#) has power effectively rested with a few people.

a. [Northwestern study concludes US is an Oligarchy.](#)

b. [German oligarchs financed Hitler.](#)

[Polyarchy](#) has decentralized rule with many small governments tailored to the desires of the local populations.

[Fascism](#) is a form of radical [authoritarian nationalism](#) considered by some to be right-wing as its [social conservatism](#) and authoritarianism are opposite of [egalitarianism](#).

[Totalitarianism](#) holds total authority over society and seeks to control all aspects of public and private life.

[Libertarianism](#) wants to limit government power.

[Dictatorship](#) has rule by a person.

[Federation](#) is composed of states with a common purpose.

Print in landscape mode.

## Kinds of Democracy

[Presidential Democracy](#) has a president and the legislative body. Their functions are separated with checks and balances designed to limit power. A 7:04 video by Noam Chomsky entitled [American Politics: Are we a Democracy? a Republic, a Polyarchy?](#) explores his view of politics today and those our founders envisioned. See [Current Political Economy Controversies](#).

[Parliamentary Democracy](#) as practiced in Great Britain has an executive branch that derives its legitimacy from and is held accountable to a [legislature](#) ([parliament](#)). The executive and [legislative branches](#) are thus interconnected. A [head of government](#) called a [prime minister](#) is appointed from the majority party or from a coalition of minority parties. A [Head of State](#) is normally a different person with varying degrees of political responsibility. In England the Queen only has ceremonial responsibilities.

[Democratic Republic vs. Parliamentary Democracy](#) written by President Wilson favored a parliamentary system. This would have made many founding fathers unhappy as they feared the budget instability and anarchy of the French Revolution.

## U.S. Democratic Federalist Republic

[Political Systems](#) involve governments and politics.

[Republic government](#) exists when a constitutionally determined government of elected leaders operating according to laws which protect individual rights associated with equality, liberty, property and necessity of consent.

a. There are many applications. What constitutes a right and their relative importance has been continually debatable.

b. John Adams said "a government, in which all men, rich and poor, magistrates and subjects, officers and people, masters and servants, the first citizen and the last, are equally subject to the laws."

c. In [United States v. Cruikshank](#) (1875) the Supreme Court ruled that the concept of "equal citizens" was inherent to Republicanism.

d. Colonial America developed in an untamed vast wilderness far from the governing country. This unique historical circumstance resulted in [American Exceptionalism](#).

## Making Laws in a Democracy

[Direct Democracy](#) also known as pure democracy has the electorate vote directly on policy initiatives.

[Indirect democracy](#) or representative democracy is when the electorate chooses officials to make laws on their behalf.

[Initiatives and Referendums](#) exist in some U.S. States.

a. Part of the early 20th century [Progressive Movement](#)

b. Allowed voters to put a proposed law on the ballot for approval and also to void existing state law.

c. DC and 27 states have this direct democracy tool. Some [Constitutional Amendments](#) have expanded the "We" of "We the people..." and moved the U.S. federal government toward Republicanism.

a. The 1911 [17th Amendment](#) changed the election of U.S. Senators from the House of Representatives to voters.

b. The 1919 [19th Amendment](#) gave women voting rights.

c. The 1971 [26th Amendment](#) lowered voting age to 18.

d. Electoral College removal from the presidential election process would move the process closer to the people. Elimination would move toward Republicanism and the majority rule of direct democracy. See [Why Founders Wanted Electoral College](#)

[Federalism](#) divides powers among member units so that political control is constitutionally decentralized. Each unit has some final authority and self-government.

a. [US Federalism](#) divides power with federal/state [Dual Federalism](#).

Great Depression hardships led some toward the expanded federal power of [Cooperative Federalism](#).

b. [Federalism Video](#) 1:38 is conservative.

c. [Political Revolution of 1800](#) replaced the strong federal government [Federalist Party](#) of Washington, Hamilton and Adams with the limited government approach of [Jeffersonian Republicanism](#).

[Democracy](#) exists when government power resides in a constitutionally determined electorate having equal say in determining the majority will. Majority political power is absolute and unlimited. Success is often determined by controlling [Majority Factions](#). See [The Federalist Papers](#), a 13:28 [Basics Video](#), and [Liberalism, Constitutionalism and Democracy](#). Abbreviated from [Economics\\_3\\_Basic\\_Characteristics\\_of\\_Capitalism](#)

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