

The New Nation

*Revolution and the New
Nation (1754–1815)*



Uniting the states

The Constitution

Ruling the new nation

Thematic Icons



Economics and business



Geography and environment



Historical concepts and questions



Politics, government and citizenship



Society and culture



War, diplomacy and foreign policy

Icons: For more detailed instructions, see the *User Guide*



Flash activity (these activities are not editable)



Teacher notes included in the Notes page



By the end of this section, you will learn about how the U.S. was governed after the Constitution was ratified and be able to answer these key questions:

- What key political developments occurred? Why did they happen?
- What conflicts threatened the new nation?
- What was life like for different people in the young republic?





Although the government laid down by the Constitution and the Bill of Rights was innovative, many, even George Washington himself, felt that it would not last.



The Constitution had gone further than the Articles of Confederation to set the structure of government. However, it did not provide a comprehensive plan for the Founding Fathers to follow. Many decisions still had to be made and the unity of the nation remained questionable.

What decisions might the government have to make?

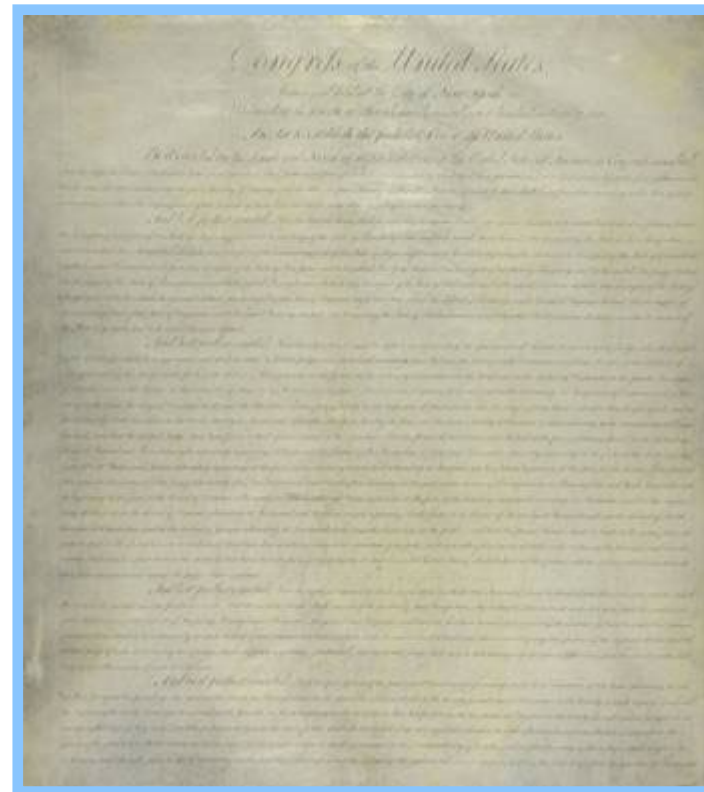


One of the first acts of Congress was to found a federal court system using the **Judiciary Act of 1789**.

The Constitution had stated that the **Supreme Court** would head the judicial branch of government.

However, it did not stipulate the exact judicial structure needed.

The Judiciary Act created six Supreme Court justices and 13 judicial districts within 11 states.



Why was the Supreme Court so important?



To structure the executive branch, President George Washington set up departments. The heads of these departments became his **Cabinet** and advised him on government. Can you match the different people to the Cabinet position they held?

Press **start** to begin.

start





Hamilton's policies



As Secretary of the Treasury, Alexander Hamilton was in charge of sorting out the nation's economy. To do this, he needed to pay off the public debt and increase revenue.

Some of his policies included:

- government assuming the debts of individual states
- creating a national bank
- moving the capital south to the District of Columbia
- creating an **excise tax** on the manufacture of whiskey.



Why do you think Hamilton made these policies?



The first factions to emerge in American politics were set around the different ideas of Thomas Jefferson and Alexander Hamilton – two members of the Cabinet.

Drag each statement to the correct place, depending on whether it refers to Thomas Jefferson or Alexander Hamilton.

Press **start** to begin.

start

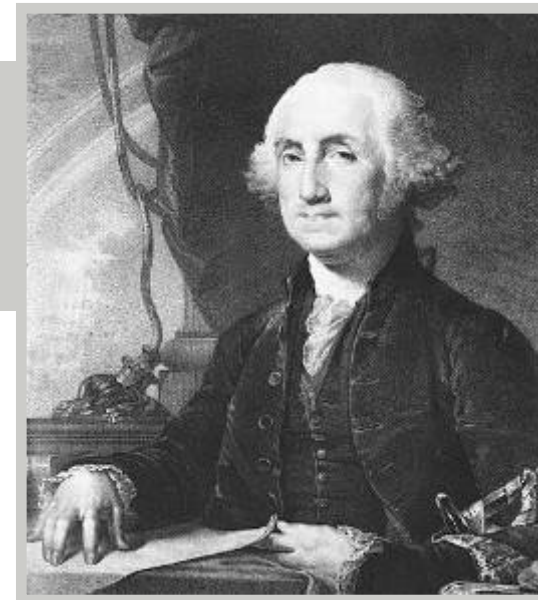


What other differences did they have? Why?



Continual disagreements between Jefferson and Hamilton increased divisions in U.S. national politics.

Although George Washington tried to ease and remain above these divisions, two parties formed from the factions.



These parties became known as the **Federalist** and **Antifederalist** parties.

Later the Antifederalists became known as the **Democratic-Republicans** to emphasize their belief in democracy instead of rule by an elite class.

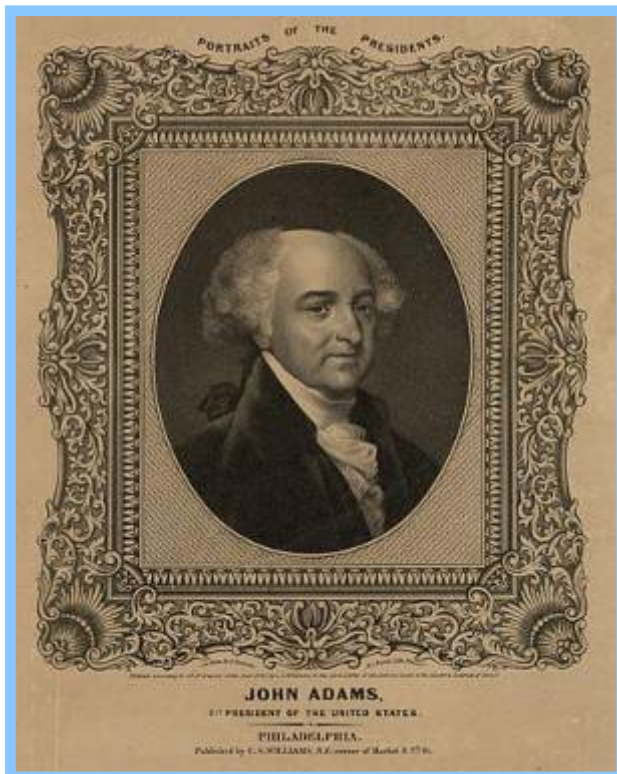
Why might the Founding Fathers fear party politics?



The two parties in reality



Initially, the divisions were not a major issue. However, party politics became increasingly important after the 1796 election.



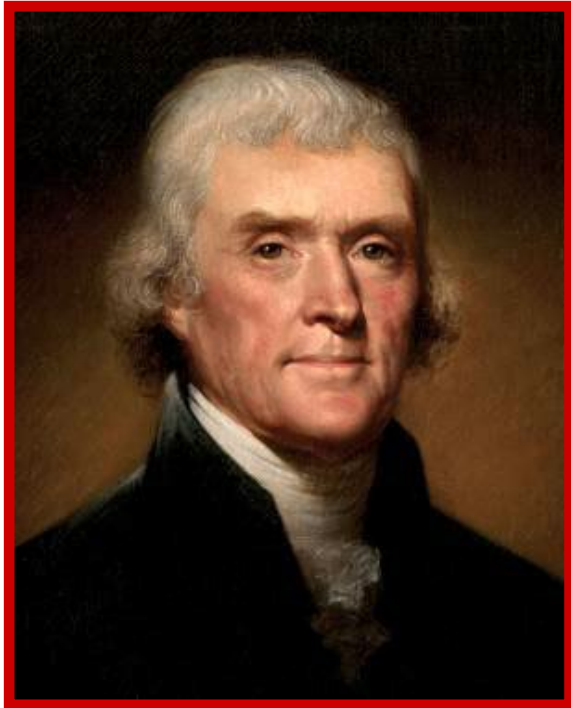
Washington was retiring, so **John Adams**, a Federalist, ran against Thomas Jefferson, a Democratic-Republican. Adams won and Jefferson, as runner up, became vice president.

In the 1800 election, Jefferson and Aaron Burr tied, which left the House of Representatives to decide. In the end, Jefferson was chosen president.

Why do you think Jefferson won?



Jefferson's presidency was a departure from the first two. He wanted to limit government and feared that the nation had strayed from the ideals of the Declaration of Independence.



In an attempt to restore these, he:

- reduced military spending
- ended certain diplomatic missions
- sold off national bank stock
- stopped all internal taxes
- gave more federal offices to Democratic-Republicans.

How else was Jefferson different from previous presidents?



Marbury v. Madison



Early in Jefferson's presidency, a precedent-setting case came before the Supreme Court – **Marbury v. Madison**. This case and its outcome would firmly establish the right of **Judicial Review**. Read this passage about the case and select the correct word to fill each blank.
Press **start** to begin.

start





After the Revolutionary War, the new nation began to grow in size. Do you know how U.S. territory changed during this period? Watch this animation and press the orange info buttons to learn more.

Press **start** to begin.

start



What foreign policy issues did the new nation have?





In 1789, the French followed the U.S.'s lead and revolted against their monarchy. They expected support from Americans. However, reaction in the U.S. was divided, mainly upon party lines.

These divisions also affected how people dressed. Use this activity to explore how opinion on the **French Revolution** could affect appearance and dress.

Press **start** to begin.

start



Why was the French Revolution so divisive?



During Jefferson's second term in office, relations between Britain and the U.S. began to deteriorate. The fighting and blockades between Britain and France had severely threatened American trade.

Watch this animation to find out more.

Press **start** to begin.

start



What consequences did the War of 1812 have?



The formation of the new nation had greatly affected the way the country was governed and how it would develop in the future. Do you know how it affected different groups in society? Press on the buttons to find out more about society in the new nation.

Press **start** to learn more.

start





The **Founding Fathers** were a group of men that helped establish and structure the government of the new nation. What do you know about these men? Press on each image on the desk to find out more about the key people involved in founding this new nation.

Press **start** to begin.

start



Who else do you think played an important role?



Test your knowledge of the creation of the new American nation with this quiz. Choose the correct answer to each question to see how much you can remember about nation building.

Press **start** to begin.

start





Test your understanding of the foundation of the new nation by recapping key terms and important people using this glossary. Press on the tabs and then each term to see a definition.

Press **start** to begin.

start

