



Study Guide: A Conversation About the Constitution

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Amending the Constitution

Article V of the U.S. Constitution

“The Congress, whenever two thirds of both Houses shall deem it necessary, shall propose Amendments to this Constitution, or, on the Application of the Legislatures of two thirds of the several States, shall call a Convention for proposing Amendments, which, in either Case, shall be valid to all Intents and Purposes, as Part of this Constitution, when ratified by the Legislatures of three fourths of the several States or by Conventions in three fourths thereof, as the one or the other Mode of Ratification may be proposed by the Congress; Provided that no Amendment which may be made prior to the Year One thousand eight hundred and eight shall in any Manner affect the first and fourth Clauses in the Ninth Section of the first Article; and that no State, without its Consent, shall be deprived of its equal Suffrage in the Senate.”

Proposing an Amendment

2/3 of both houses of Congress vote to propose an amendment

- OR -

2/3 of the state legislatures ask Congress to call a national convention to propose amendments (never been done)

Once an amendment is proposed,

It must be **ratified**.

3/4 of the State legislatures approve it (38 out of 50 states)

- OR -

Ratifying conventions in 3/4 of the states Approve amendment

Within the set period of time as determined by the Amendment

(only used once – 21st Amendment)

Total of 4 paths an amendment can take to be added to the constitution:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Thousands of proposals

Only 33 got 2/3 vote in Congress

Only 27, including the Bill of Rights, have been ratified.