

Differences between Indian Government and U.S. Government - Indian Polity

India is the largest democracy in the world, whereas the United States of America is the oldest democracy. Although both countries are democratic republics, there are some differences in the way both governments function. UPSC aspirants should be aware of the basic differences between the two governments.

Differences between the Governments of India and the USA

The differences between both the governments are given under separate headings.

Political Parties

India	USA
Although there are currently 2 major national parties - the INC and the BJP; there are hundreds of regional and smaller parties in the political scene.	There are two major political parties here. They are the Republican Party and the Democratic Party.

Head of State

India	USA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elected head of Government is the Prime Minister. He is the executive head. The President is the constitutional head of state. Citizens cast their vote to elect their representatives to the Lok Sabha. The party that wins a majority of seats in the Lok Sabha gets invited by the President to form the government. The leader of that party becomes the Prime Minister. Elections to the Lok Sabha are held every five years generally. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Head of State is the President. Citizens cast their ballot in every state to elect members of the electoral college (popular vote) who in turn cast electoral votes to determine the President. The President holds office for a four-year term.

Government

India	USA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The government can lose the mandate if its majority cannot be proved in the Lok Sabha in the event of a no-confidence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The President is not dependent on the strength of his party in Congress (legislative

<p>motion.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This would lead to mid-term elections. • Parliamentary form of government. 	<p>body).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He remains in power for the four years of his term unless he is impeached or incapacitated. • Presidential form of government.
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Cabinet

India	USA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Prime Minister appoints members of his cabinet from his party or from those supporting his coalition (if it's a coalition government). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • President nominates cabinet members and sends them to the Senate for confirmation. • The cabinet members need not be Congress members, they could just be industry experts.

Legislative Body

India	USA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Parliament is the supreme legislative body. • It is a bicameral legislature comprising of the President, the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha. • Lok Sabha (House of the People) members are elected directly by the people. There are 545 members. • Rajya Sabha (Council of States) members are elected by the State legislative assemblies. Its total membership is 245. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Congress is the legislature of the USA. • The Senate and the House of Representatives are the two chambers of the Congress • The House of Representatives (commonly referred to as the House) is the Lower House while the Senate is the Upper House.

Legislation authority

India	USA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no strict separation of powers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Here, there is a clear separation of powers

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The executive is part of the elected legislature and remains in power while the House is in motion. • The Prime Minister cannot override the legislature to make laws. • A bill becomes a law only when both Houses pass it and it is signed by the President. • The president can send any bill back to the parliament for consideration if he deems fit. But if it's passed again, he should sign it. • The SC can strike down any law that it considers unconstitutional. 	<p>between the executive, the legislature and the judiciary.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A law passed by the Congress can be vetoed by the President. • He can send it back for consideration, or he can also bypass the Congress and issue an executive order (which has the force of law). • However, Congress can override the veto by obtaining a 2/3rd majority in both Houses.
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Federalism

India	USA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • India can be said to be a case of cooperative federalism. • There is only one constitution for the whole country. • India is neither purely federal nor purely unitary. • It is a federal structure with a strong unitary bias. • India is a union of states meaning states have no authority to recede from India. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It has a federal system with each state having its own constitution. • Here, power is shared between the federal government and state governments.

UPSC Questions related to Differences between Indian and US Government

How is India's government different from the United States?

The basic difference between the governments of India and the US is that the Indian government is a parliamentary model whereas the USA has a presidential system.

What is the difference between union of states and federation of states?

In a Union of States like India, there is a strong centre and power is shared between the centre and the states. India is described as a union of states in the Constitution. This is because India was formed as a result of

princely states joining the union (which was British India). In contrast, the USA was formed as a result of the initial 13 colonies coming together to form the union. This is more like a bottom-up approach.

Is USA a federal country?

Yes, it is a federal country. Every state in the USA has its own constitution as well.

Who elects the president of India?

The president of India is elected by an electoral college comprising of MPs of both Houses, and the MLAs of the legislative assemblies of all the states and UTs.

