

Joint Sitting of Both Houses of Parliament

Parliamentary terms are important from the polity and governance perspectives in the UPSC exam. IAS aspirants should understand their meaning and application, as questions can be asked from this static portion of the [UPSC syllabus](#) in both the UPSC Prelims and the UPSC Mains exams.

In this article, you can read about the joint sitting of the Parliament for the civil services exam.

Joint Sitting of Parliament

The Constitution of India provides for a joint session of the Parliament.

- India has a bicameral Parliament. To pass any bill, both the Houses (the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha) must concur. The bill has to be passed by both Houses before the President can give his/her assent.
- The founding fathers foresaw situations where there could be a deadlock between both Houses of Parliament.
- Therefore, they provided for a constitutional mechanism to break this deadlock, in the form of joint sittings.

Joint Sitting of Parliament is Summoned by

- The joint sitting is called by the President.
- The Speaker presides over a joint sitting. In the absence of the Speaker, the Deputy Speaker of the Lok Sabha presides over it, and in his absence, the sitting is presided over by the Deputy Chairman of the Rajya Sabha.
- If any of the above-mentioned people are not available, any Member of Parliament (MP) can preside over the sitting by consensus of both Houses.
- The quorum to constitute a joint sitting: 1/10th of the total number of members of the House.

Joint Sitting Constitutional Provision

Article 108 of the Indian Constitution provides for a joint sitting of both Houses of Parliament. Accordingly, a joint session can be summoned when:

If after a bill is passed by one House and transmitted to the other House -

1. The other House rejects this bill, or
2. The Houses do not agree on the amendments made to the bill, or
3. More than six months elapse with the bill being received by the other House without it being passed.

Then, the President can summon a joint sitting unless the bill had elapsed because of the Lok Sabha's dissolution.

How is the period of the above-mentioned 6 months calculated?

Those days are not taken into account when the House is prorogued or adjourned for over 4 consecutive days.

Conduct of Business

- According to Article 118, the President can make rules for the procedure of the joint sitting after due consultation with the Lok Sabha Speaker and Rajya Sabha Chairman.
- In a joint sitting, any new amendment cannot be proposed in the bill, excepting those which have been passed by one House and refused by the other.
- Amendments which are relevant to the matter at discussion can only be proposed.
- With regard to the admissibility of amendments, the decision of the presiding officer is final.
- The bill in a joint sitting is passed by a simple majority.

According to Article 87 of the Constitution, there are two instances when the country's President specifically addresses a joint sitting of both Houses. They are:

1. At the start of the first session after a general election. This is when the reconstituted Lok Sabha meets for the first time after being elected.
2. At the start of the first session every year.

Exceptions to Joint Sitings

There are two exceptions when a joint sitting cannot be summoned. They are for the following bills:

1. **Constitution Amendment Bill:** According to **Article 368**, the Constitution can be amended only by a 2/3rd majority in both Houses. There is no provision for a joint sitting in case of a disagreement between both Houses.
2. **Money Bill (Article 110):** As per the Constitution, [money bills](#) require the Lok Sabha's approval only.
 1. Even if the Rajya Sabha does not pass the money bill within 14 days, the bill is considered passed by both Houses after the period of 14 days is over.
 2. The Rajya Sabha can make recommendations to the Bill which the Lok Sabha is not required to accept.
 3. Thus, in the case of a money bill, the necessity of a joint sitting does not arise.

You can read all about [Sessions of the Indian Parliament](#) at the linked article.

UPSC Questions related to Joint Sitting of Parliament

How many times has the joint session of Indian parliament been called?

So far, there have been four bills for which a joint session had been called:

Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961

Banking Service Commission Act (Repeal), 1978

Prevention of Terrorism Act, 2002

Women's Reservation Bill (2008, not passed)

When was the first joint sitting of Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha held?

The first joint sitting was conducted in May 1961 when there were disagreements between the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha over a few amendments to the Dowry Prohibition Bill.

What will happen if President summons for the joint session of parliament and in the meantime, Lok Sabha dissolves?

If the President summons a joint sitting and in the meanwhile, the Lok Sabha dissolves, then the joint sitting

takes place in spite of the dissolution of the Lower House. But in case the Lok Sabha is dissolved before the President issues a summons for the joint sitting, the pending bill lapses and there is no joint sitting.

