

The Articles of Confederation versus the Constitution

The table below compares nine (9) main items different between these two documents.

The Articles of Confederation	The Constitution
Legislative Branch:- Congress is made up of one house (Unicameral)	Legislative Branch: - Congress is made up of two houses (Bicameral) i.e. the Senate and the House of Representatives
Each State has one vote in Congress	Each state has two votes in the Senate; each state has one or more votes in House of Representatives, depending on each states population
At least 9 of 13 states must approve a law in order to pass	A majority (2/3) of each house must approve a law
No Executive Branch	Executive Branch, headed by the President, carries out laws.
No Judicial Branch	Judicial Branch, headed by the Supreme Court, interprets laws.
Only states can tax	Congress (and states) can tax
Each state can coin its own money	Only Congress can coin money
Each state can regulate trade with other states	Only Congress can regulate trade between states
Each state can act independently	States must accept the Constitution as the supreme law of the land.

Weaknesses of the Articles of Confederation and the Resulting Constitutional Changes

Weaknesses of the Articles

Unicameral Legislature:
Each state had one equal vote
no matter what size of population

Two-Thirds Majority needed to
pass any laws

No control of Interstate or
Foreign Trade

Congress could levy but NOT
collect taxes

No Executive Department to
Enforce laws

No national Judicial Branch,
Only State Courts

Unanimous vote of states needed
to amend the constitutional
structure



Constitutional Changes

Bicameral Legislature:
Representation proportional
in House of Representatives
States equal in the Senate

Simple majority could pass laws

Congress regulates Interstate and
Foreign Trade

Congress could levy AND
collect taxes

Executive Department headed by a
Single President

National judiciary, headed by a
Supreme Court

Two-Thirds vote of Congress, then
Three-Fourths of the states must
approve